EVENT VERSUS PROCESS:
MAYORAL CONTROL'S POTENTIAL AND LIMITS AS METHOD TO PROMOTE
SCHOOL-SERVICE COLLABORATIONS

By

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A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Educational Policy–Doctor of Philosophy

2015

**ABSTRACT**

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Although many acknowledge that out-of-school factors influence students, most governance systems create collaboration barriers among schools and other social services by removing education policy from other governments. One governance reform, mayoral control of schools, is partially based on assumptions that city executives can reduce partnership barriers if they have formal education policy authority. In two parts, this dissertation examines whether mayors in different education governance systems pursue school-service collaboration and whether formal powers afforded by governance change are most meaningful to collaborators. Part one suggests that mayors with legal education authority include schools and school-service collaboration in their agendas more frequently. Part two finds that although mayors in a mayoral control system better helped create political environments conducive to school-service partnership, they did not do so in ways reliant on their formal powers. While this study shows the important roles mayors can play when pursuing school-service collaboration, it does not find these roles rely on formal powers granted by governance reform.

To my brother Steve, who by example taught me to pursue what I find fulfilling.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At some level, this dissertation revolves around an old adage: "it takes a village to raise a child." Therefore, it would be foolhardy to let this study's readers begin without praising the village that raised this study and me. I'm sure those that know me well wondered whether this section would be one of my grand (and verbose) expositions about life. Just kidding—those that know me well expected as much. As a man of the people, it's time to give them what they want.

I've benefitted for the past five years from a wonderful network of colleagues. At MSU, John Lane, Justina Judy, Claire Yates, Mark Helmsing, Sarah Winchell Lenhoff, and so many others have pushed me throughout my development. Outside MSU, Andrew McEachin, Randy Clemens, June Ahn, and Dara Zeehandelaar not only provided thoughtful discussions of my work, but also became dear friends. No other peer deserves as much acknowledgement as Andy Saultz. Andy and I joke that we are "academic life partners," and he continues to be a colleague in every sense of the word. However, this is but a sliver of who Andy is as a man. If we all could emulate a shred of his kindness, thoughtfulness, and loyal friendship, the world would be a much better place.

Many of those I knew before MSU have stuck with me, feigning interest in the finer points of education policy while I rant incessantly at them. Colin and Ashley Brown, Mike and Amanda Hallquist, Andy Seeger, Bill Smolen, Dave Johnson, Ken Hemba, James Payne, Chris Miller, Sara Stanford, Andrew Brenner, Abbie Sorrendino, Christina Walker, Paula Reichel, Justin Martucci, Andrew and Julia Vieweg, Ben Fenwick, and Jillian Oberfield keep me grounded and help me escape Ph.D. life when necessary.

My parents, Bill and Sue, taught me more lessons than I will ever be able to recall. They raised my brother and I in an exurban part of southeast Wisconsin and never let the insular thinking and risk aversion that dominated that town creep into their children's life. They prioritized and continue to prioritize the welfare of their two sons over their own. They sometimes fail to see either of us as the strong, independent men they created. Instead, they continue to treat us as pieces of clay that they must mold—a trait probably endemic to parenthood. I hope that my mother and father stand back from time to time and admire their hard work. Steve and I would not be the men we are without you, mom and dad. I love you both more than I can adequately express—except through interpretive dance, which happens to be your forthcoming 40th anniversary gift.

My brother Steve, to whom I dedicate this dissertation, is one of the best people I know. He's been my biggest critic, my biggest advocate, and my best friend. Always quick with advice (even when you don't want it!) and slow with a "goodbye," I can't imagine a better brother (you didn't really think I'd spare your long goodbyes, did you?). He brought his wife Emily, a strong and wonderful woman, into my life. They let me sleep on the futon of their small one-bedroom apartment in Brooklyn for half a summer while I worked unpaid in New York City. They subsidized a room rental for the other half, probably so I'd leave them alone. They continued to be generous to both Megan and I and never once asked for even a "thank you." I can't wait for the four of us to have many more adventures with your sweet new daughter Adelaide.

I owe many debts of gratitude to my frighteningly brilliant dissertation committee. Dorothea Anagnostopoulos has taught me more than I probably realize about thinking through issues. Her ability to listen intently and then cut directly to key points is a trait I hope to someday mimic. I'll always remember my dissertation derailing and, as I sought to get it back on course,

blathering at Dorothea for what felt like an eternity. In her trademark calm, she reassured me while also showing I completely missed the point all along. She was right, by the way—I was completely missing the point.

In my very first class session as doctoral student, Suzanne Wilson provided me with a wakeup moment. As I remember it, she said to the class, "You all got to graduate school by being very good at giving others what they wanted. Now, it's time to do what you want and convince others it's worth something." While I'm sure I misremember the quote, the message continues to stick with me. Suzanne asks hard questions that make me a better scholar, and her toughness is only matched by her reassurance when things go wrong. She provides advice any time I need it, and more than telling me things will be alright as rough patches emerge, she actually does so in ways that make me believe things will be okay! I look forward to her future mentorship and hope someday I can figure out how to pay her back for all her help. I also hope I've convinced her that this work is worth something.

Sarah Reckhow was among the first faculty members that treated me as a peer. I vividly remember reading a manuscript of her fantastic book, *Follow the Money*. As we discussed it, I realized she was opening herself to critiques and suggestions in ways confusing to a third-year doctoral student—I didn't know anything! I've since greatly enjoyed our work together and grown a lot from it. Further, her insights into my own work have been invaluable as I move forward. She's helped teach me not to sweat the small stuff and to not be afraid to show I know a thing or two. I look forward to many more years of scholarly discussions, and while I'm happy to have gained a colleague, I'm equally as happy to have gained a friend.

As we ate lunch on my first MSU visit, I asked Rebecca Jacobsen a question more blunt than the ones I think she typically hears. She gave me an equally blunt answer, and thus began

our friendship. I really do think of Rebecca this way, as friend first and mentor/colleague second. While no one has done and continues to do as much for my intellectual development, it's all secondary to what she means to me as a person. She's provided me with countless examples about how to be an academic, all the while demanding I become *my* version of an academic. She's been very critical of my work, and she's wondered aloud more than once what the hell I was doing. She's been *hard* on me at times. But, I'm better for it. And for every instance where she was hard on me, there were five where she was sympathetic when I needed it, listened to complaints, or helped me struggle with the self-doubt and angst doctoral work fuels. There's so much more to say about Rebecca Jacobsen, but I suppose I'll just leave it at "thanks" and save the rest for a note so long she'll roll her eyes at me.

And last, but certainly not least, I thank my wife and partner Megan for her support throughout the dissertation process and in all other facets of my life. Our relationship started over crappy diner coffee, blossomed thanks to Sun Country Airlines instituting direct flights from Lansing to D.C., and has embraced more anxiety than I can recall. But that's life, and we keep each other steady anytime things get tough. During our wedding, we promised to bask in the good times; to heed the advice Kurt Vonnegut wrote about and say to the other, "If this isn't nice, I don't know what is." We don't always say it, but I have a hard time imagining anything nicer than a day spent with you. I love you.

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# KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

CYC: Providence Children and Youth Cabinet

DSC: Detailed service collaboration discussion

DSCe: Detailed service collaboration discussion including education as collaborator

GRASA: Greater Rochester After School Alliance

MC: Mayoral control

Non-MC: Non-mayoral control

PASA: Providence After School Alliance

PFSCS: Providence Full Service Community Schools

PPSD: Providence Public School District

PTU: Providence Teachers Union

RCSD: Rochester City School District

RCZ: Rochester Children's Zone

RTA: Rochester Teachers Association

RTF: ROC the Future

SC: Service collaboration discussion

SCe: Service collaboration discussion including education as collaborator

SOC: State of the City speech

**INTRODUCTION**

While recounting her time as mayor in a recent editorial, former Atlanta mayor Shirley Franklin discusses education policy in relation to other issues:

> Since an elected school board rather than the mayor runs Atlanta's public school system, I felt limited in what I could or should do to engage directly in improving our public schools. I focused my attention on tackling the big noneducation issues facing our city and left the administration of our school system to the board. With the benefit of hindsight, I know that I was just too quiet on education…
>
> I would aim to demonstrate how important it is to view big challenges like poverty, education, unemployment, infrastructure, housing, and public safety as elements of one big quality-of-life issue that are best tackled through a more collaborative approach to problem-solving. These efforts can also help establish and monitor community wide goals. None of these is a one-off issue. They are all connected, and they need to be attacked together. (Franklin, 2014, para. 5-8)

This is the environment confronting the majority of urban districts in the United States—a vast array of intertwined issues influence schools, but few cities have systems that govern schools *and* other social services. While Mayor Franklin highlights her personal beliefs, an evolving political climate opens new potential for governance arrangements that tackle many different social issues and benefit students through service collaborations. This study investigates whether and how mayors like Franklin shape collaborative environments in their cities when they have different levels of education policy authority.

Franklin's regrets about urban school reform and mayoral involvement come at a time when American schools, and urban schools in particular, are seen in crisis (Cibulka & Boyd,

2003). Many compendiums tackle the various issues facing urban schools, devoting substantial attention to things such as finance, teacher preparation, and accountability policy (for one such review, see Ladd & Fiske, 2008). Some volumes also include research on the ways outside-of-school issues like income, race, or other social service needs influence students. In perhaps the most comprehensive detailing of these issues, Rothstein (2004) highlights an array of social (e.g. child-rearing practices) and economic (e.g. housing accessibility) factors that negatively influence children from low-income families and communities. Indeed, research dating back to the 1960s shows that these non-school factors likely account for more of the variance in student performance than those experiences a child has during the school day (Coleman et al., 1966). Given their density, urban schools serve large concentrations of students affected by these social and economic issues. Thus, although urban school districts are perceived to be insufficiently serving students, they primarily serve students facing many other outside-of-school risks.

Beyond the issues affecting the populations they serve, schools and other organizations tasked with improving youth outcomes frequently suffer from their own problems. Even with a focus solely on school issues, large urban districts must grapple with internal organizational issues such as staff turnover, bureaucratic ossification, and resource constraints (Hess, 1999). Moreover, these hard-to-change organizations struggle for agenda attention and resources among the panoply of urban issues. Thus, the ecology of problems facing urban education reforms are both in-school and out, and districts face many constraints limiting their effectiveness as they seek to address issues on their own. These difficulties mean that overhauling individual organizations may be less plausible and effective than collaborations with other groups working on interrelated issues.

The persistent problems confronting urban districts in their quest for reform leads to calls for a broader intervention—one where reforms tackle wide-ranging in- and out-of-school issues affecting youth rather than narrowly focusing on the school day.[1] However, changing districts is no easy feat; many studies show how changing districts proves difficult even when focusing more narrowly than broad efforts to combine education and social reform. For example, Spillane (2004) highlights how implementation efforts distort science and math curricular reforms while Strunk, McEachin, and Westover (2014) show barriers to capacity-building interventions in low-performing schools. Therefore, rather than drastically altering individual districts at great costs, collaborative arrangements that link schools and other service providers may tap comparative strengths among the different partners while changing how actors conceptualize student issues.

Yet, just as problems arise when overhauling individual organizations, inter-agency collaborations also present political barriers. Potential examples include initiatives linking schools and a city parks department to conduct gang prevention, or schools and a non-profit providing free vision screenings. Breakdowns in inter-personal communication, lack of information sharing, unwillingness to relinquish responsibilities or protecting one's "turf," and various other issues can stymie cooperation among partners. Furthermore, issues unique to districts present political risks when pursuing collaborative arrangements. For example, resource and power imbalances likely exist for outsiders working with schools. School districts are often any city's largest public institution. They probably control more resources, have more varied goals, face more demands from citizens, operate under regulations from various governments, and serve more clients than any other potential partner.

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[1] For one example, the Broader, Bolder Approach to Education serves as a mission statement for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers to promote solutions extending beyond the schoolyard. See: http://www.boldapproach.org/about.

Another key difference between schools and other services likely plays a role in collaborations: reforms taking hold during the Progressive Era removed education policy from municipal governments, opting instead for governance via issue-specific and independently elected school boards (Reese, 2005). In turn, the formal structures controlling education policy in the vast majority of the United States formalize divisions between schools and their boards on the one hand, and all other outside social services providers on the other. These organizational barriers decrease the likelihood and ease of collaboration. Within these contexts, Mayor Franklin provides her editorial and hopes for increased attention to education as a broader social issue.

**Motivation**

This study is motivated by the intersection of these various issues. Collaborations among schools and social services may comprehensively address problems confronting urban families; however, historical removal of school governance from general-purpose municipal arenas divides those working on these separate but intertwined issues. In turn, this structure promotes education's conceptualization as a school issue rather than a broader social phenomenon. Treating the social and education issues as separate diminishes capacities and reduces incentives to coordinate reforms to help students in broadly defined ways.

However, recent scholarly work suggests that shifting political environments allow for education's reconceptualization as an issue that overlaps with many other social and economic factors (Henig, 2013). Gradual developments over the past 40 to 50 years brought increased education policy activity among general-purpose governments (e.g. city, state, or federal governments). As interest in education policy grows among executives, legislatures, and courts across all levels of government, new interest groups mobilize and new policy options become

available to address education issues. These options, coupled with incentives to treat problems holistically, give actors like mayors reasons and avenues to pursue school-service collaborations.

More concretely within this environment, specific governance reforms seek to break down the barriers separating schools from other policy areas. Mayor Jenkins' sentiments opening this paper directly speak to these divisions—without formal authority, she expended her constrained energies in other areas where she felt fewer limits on her work. However, one reform, mayoral control of schools, alters governance arrangements and provides mayors with formal education policy authority. Among other rationales, theories promoting mayoral control posit that an integrated governance structure, responsible for education and other social services, will be more able to foster school-service collaborations.

**Research Questions and the Current Study**

This research investigates mayoral control as an initiative to enhance school-service collaborations. More specifically, this study asks two groups of questions with special attention to differences between mayoral control districts and those with traditionally elected boards:

1.  Do mayors in mid-sized and large cities advance agendas that include education and school-service collaborations? Do mayors with formal power over schools provided by mayoral control have agendas covering these issues with different frequency or with more detail?

2.  In places where mayors express relatively strong rhetorical commitment to school-service collaboration, what issues confront collaborative initiatives? Do mayors work to overcome roadblocks and create positive political environments for collaboration? Do mayors in cities with mayoral control operate differently and in ways reliant on their legal authority over education policy?

To study the first group of questions, this research considers annual mayoral agenda speeches from a set of 92 cities. These cities represent districts with mayoral control as well as those with traditional school governance that have features making them most similar in size and structure to mayoral control cities. Overall, findings suggest that while mayors across all cities include education and collaboration messages in their agendas, mayors who have control over education policy discuss these issues more frequently. Further, mayors with formal education policy authority place greater relative importance on education collaborations and more often include details in their messages about school-service collaborations. These findings align with mayoral control theories and suggest that mayors in cities with mayoral control advance education and school-service collaboration agendas at higher rates than their counterparts in cities with traditional school governance.

To address the second group of questions, this study uses the above findings to identify a smaller set of cities where mayors talk about collaboration with schools most often. From this subgroup, two case cities are selected to explore collaborative initiatives: Providence, Rhode Island (which has mayoral control of schools) and Rochester, New York (which has a traditionally elected school board). In these cities one might expect two finds. First, that the factors confronting school-service collaborations vary because mayoral control helps executives overcome barriers in Providence. Second, that Providence has political environments more conducive to school-service collaborations because mayors actively pursue school partnerships in ways that use their formal education policy authority. Primarily using interview data from each city, three primary findings emerge.

First, similar factors influence collaborations with schools in Providence and Rochester. In total, participants in both cities identify the same six common issues much more frequently

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than other issues: school bureaucracies, relationships among collaborators, resources for collaborations, goal alignment within partnerships, agenda presence, and turnover. Furthermore, mayoral control theories suppose that formal education policy authority will help executives address each of these six issues. Because the same issues most often confront school-service collaborations in both cities, these findings suggest that mayors either do not pursue school partnerships or that they do so ineffectively.

Second, specific councils exist in both cities to help overcome common collaborative issues, despite dramatically different mayoral involvement in each city. In Providence, a single youth cabinet serves as convening body around these issues. Respondents indicate that the single point of access for many actors across the city leads to stronger school-service collaborations and that this cabinet largely grew due to mayoral support. Meanwhile, Rochester respondents describe a far more diffuse collaborative network that fails to provide unified space to develop links among organizations. A key difference between the two stems from mayoral involvement—in Providence, the mayor was a chief driving force behind the council's formation whereas mayors have not involved themselves similarly in Rochester. While these findings are congruent with mayoral control's theoretical benefit to collaborative environments, the actions mayors take in Providence do not depend on their formal education policy authority. Furthermore, at no point do informants suggest that mayoral control governance was precondition for this unified focus. Thus, it remains unclear whether mayors involve themselves because they control education policy.

Third, even under favorable circumstances, there are limits to mayoral involvement. In both cities, informants described similar issues regarding the ability to sustain collaborative initiatives. In Providence, once established, the youth cabinet was strategically removed from the

mayor's office. Rather than be subject to the ebb and flow of mayoral agendas, Providence providers believe the city to be better served by a standalone and more stable group. In Rochester, efforts to create an organization with similar focus to Providence's have not become preoccupied with mayoral buy-in during formation stages. Instead, stakeholders are much more concerned with creating a "groundswell" of sustained and community-driven collaborations so future mayors and superintendents cannot control collaborative efforts. While this may explain Rochester's difficulties when developing political environments to promote collaboration, informants believe a community approach to be more sustainable than mayor-led initiatives. In both cities, participants discuss sustainability concerns when school-service collaborations rely on mayors, suggesting limits to mayoral control's ability to foster long-term partnerships.

As one informant describes, this takes an "event" versus "process" view of collaboration. Whereas theoretical arguments suggest the event of mayoral control can potentially foster collaboration, those working on these efforts care much more about processes in place to help address recurring collaborative issues. If built on a broad community foundation, they believe, such institutionalized bonds will outlive mayors. When considering all factors, these cases illustrate the important roles mayors can play. However, mayors do not behave in ways clearly tied to governance arrangements and participants frequently express skepticism about mayor-led initiatives. Therefore, this study finds limited evidence to support mayoral control theories that a mayor's formal education policy authority necessarily benefits to school-service collaboration.

This study investigates what collaborators believe most obstructs their work and what role mayors play in building efforts to overcome these issues and develop collaborations with schools. This research does not evaluate whether collaborations meet objectives or whether they implement programs with fidelity. Nor does it argue that mayoral control inherently benefits or

harms a city. Rather, this study promotes broader discussion of tensions present in mayoral control theories. For example, mayoral control's top-down and short-run theories of action may conflict with informant beliefs about mayor-led collaboration. Findings may also suggest tensions within mayoral control theories where its other hypothesized benefits conflict with its ability to promote school-service collaborations.

**Study Organization**

Chapter 1 develops the study's underpinnings, exploring issues identified in the literature as important to successful collaboration and synthesizing these issues within the literatures on education's changing political environments and mayoral control. Chapter 2 reviews methodological frameworks employed throughout the study. Chapters 3 through 6 present the empirical data for the study with special attention to differences between mayoral control and traditionally governed districts. Chapter 3 uses a broad and longitudinal set of mayoral agenda speeches to investigate whether and to what degree mayoral agendas include education and school-service collaboration. Chapter 4 outlines the Rochester and Providence cases. Chapter 5 presents the factors most commonly influencing collaborations in the two cities and discusses how, even though mayoral control theories address these issues, the same issues persist in both cities. Chapter 6 highlights formal collaborative councils pursued in both cities to promote collaboration with schools, the roles mayors play in developing these councils, and the long-term sustainability concerns stemming from mayoral involvement. Finally, Chapter 7 concludes by discussing tensions among mayoral control's theoretical benefits while also highlighting directions for practice, policy, and future research.

**CHAPTER 1: Changing, Rather than "Beating the Odds"**

Some popular narratives extol people and initiatives that "beat the odds" facing urban schools and show dramatic academic improvement. It must be noted that the "odds" stacked against school reformers are those education, social, and economic issues discussed previously and, more precisely, their confluence within cities. When shown effective programs, some may argue that urban education systems would improve if they could simply replicate these smaller-scale successes seen throughout the U.S. These calls ignore the fact that successes often occur based on the degree to which they mitigate outside-of-school factors. Replication arguments also overlook complex organizational and political factors that limit schools' abilities to interact with other service providers to try and overcome the various issues influencing students. However, as this chapter explores, changing dynamics in education politics and governance reforms provide opportunity for districts to improve collaboration with other social service providers.

**Beating the Odds**

Despite evidence that schools explain only a portion of differences between affluent and low-income student achievement (Coleman et al., 1966), some narratives show that individual teachers appear to overcome challenges facing students and improve their academic achievement (Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005). For example, Jaime Escalante and Rafe Esquith exemplify teachers whose at-risk students performed very well academically despite being unlikely to do so.[2] Escalante set high expectations for his immigrant students and helped them achieve success in advanced courses, while Esquith's immigrant middle-schoolers mastered arts, literature, and math. However, successful replication proved difficult. In Escalante's case, he was unable to

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[2] See chapter two of Rothstein (2004) for a more thorough description of Escalante, Esquith, and KIPP.

replicate his model when given the opportunity in a different city. In Esquith's, benefits from a relatively advantaged student population, extended learning opportunities, and extra resources supported his ability to provide opportunities not typically afforded his students (Rothstein, 2004). When considering that some unseen factor potentially buoyed Escalante's success and Esquith benefitted from numerous supports a typical teacher may not have, it becomes unlikely that improving individual teachers is sufficient for broader system improvement.

Beyond individual teachers, some popular schooling models similarly beat expectations. Many tout the expanding set of schools run by the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP), which set high expectations and focus on academic results. Proponents highlight research showing KIPP schools outperforming their peer public schools (e.g. Tuttle et al., 2013). However, other research examines the extraordinary efforts put in by teachers in KIPP schools (Wilder & Jacobsen, 2010), which expand learning time and provide experiences otherwise left outside-of-school financed by additional outside funds (Miron, Urschel, & Saxton, 2011). These additional funding and human capital inputs raise doubts about the model's sustainability as it extends beyond a narrow subset of schools.

Finally, the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) provides perhaps the most famous and comprehensive odds-beating example. HCZ provides health and social services to students and parents while simultaneously integrating these services with its education model. Academic gains from this program are promising, though not without doubters (e.g. Tough, 2008 for positivity; Whitehurst & Croft, 2010 for skepticism). However, like aforementioned cases, HCZ has unique benefits that allow it to undertake such a comprehensive program, not least of which is significant private funding drawn to magnetic founder Geoffrey Canada (Tough, 2008). Further evidencing replication difficulties, challenges confront the Obama Administration's HCZ

reproduction efforts (through Promise Neighborhood grants). For already awarded grants, implementation challenges raise questions about whether the 48 recipients will produce sustained change (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2014). Limiting future initiatives, Congress scaled back its commitment and cancelled new grants in 2013 and 2014.

None of the preceding paragraphs should detract from impressive successes in these cases. However, any school-based claim to the solution for the problems confronting urban schools fails to acknowledge unique benefits enjoyed by individuals or relatively small programs. Moreover, each of these illustrates how going beyond typical school functions may be necessary to broadly ameliorate the issues facing urban youth.

**Changing the Odds**

While each of the above examples benefits from forces outside a typical school's control, each also exists at a programmatic and not systemic level. When expanding programs into broader system-level initiatives, a city's distinct local contexts will ultimately alter reforms. Single-purpose education governance, which divides schools and other social service providers, presents another barrier. Because reforms to create school-service collaborations will likely require efforts from many non-school actors, different governance structures create another form of variation and may produce misalignment between education and non-education actors. Therefore, successful systemic change relies on the degree to which it can align a city's political and governance structures. Such alignment will support the sustained work necessary to overcome the social issues students face by reducing barriers to concerted policy action.

With this in mind, the remainder of this chapter highlights how broad shifts in American education politics present opportunity to reconceptualize school relationships with traditionally non-school services. First, it summarizes recent research arguing education politics and policy

more closely resemble general-purpose governance, which may improve education's link to various services. To better understand how new possibilities present in this changing political atmosphere may benefit partnerships, the second section outlines organizational factors that promote successful coordination. This chapter's final section discusses one governance reform, mayoral control of schools, and its potential to engender school-service collaborations. Rather than focusing on how to emulate people and programs that *beat* the odds stacked against schools, these broader issues potentially alter how schools and social services may work together to *change* the odds.

**Shifting from single- to general-purpose politics.** Schools operate within a federal framework that has shifted over time. Originally delegated to states by the $10^{th}$ Amendment, education policy has been further devolved to localities for much of American history (Manna, 2007; Reese, 2005). Beginning in the 1960s and 1980s, federal and state governments interjected themselves into education policy processes, respectively (Cohen & Moffit, 2009; Fowler, 2009). Initially, limited access to education engaged these governments. Over time, they shifted focus on accountability for academic excellence, highlighting how competing goals for education interact with shifting governmental attention to education (Labaree, 1997).

These shifts also corresponded with changes in prevailing education politics. For example, 2001's No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) signaled expanding willingness on the part of federal actors to create education policy at the federal level. This federal attention also altered interest group coalitions, reshaped which groups hold influence, and opened new avenues to influence education policy (Debray-Pelot & McGuinn, 2009; McDonnell, 2012; Reckhow & Snyder, 2014). For example, Debray-Pelot (2007) finds that education specific groups (e.g. American Federation of Teachers) lost federal education policy influence from 1998 to 2001

while more broadly focused groups (e.g. Business Roundtable) gained influence leading to NCLB's passage.

Similar to new actors' entrance into education policy, shifts where state and federal governments become more involved in education policy also alter the issues that rise and fall on agendas and the levers open to affect change. Indeed, as state and federal agendas focus on issues like school accountability, new policies in education in recent decades look familiar to other policy realms. For example, market-based reforms (school choice) or increased service contracting eventually made their way into education policy after other policy realms popularized their usage (Henig, 2009b; 2013). While the effectiveness of new policy options leaves room for debate, it is undeniable that governance changes alter the tools available to tackle educational problems.

Beyond specific instances of federal or state power, data show that executives (governors, presidents, and mayors), legislatures (federal, state, and city councils), and the courts increasingly interject or find themselves pulled into education policy (Henig, 2013). As education continues to be reabsorbed by these general-purpose arenas, some important opportunities emerge. First, single-purpose governance, such as school districts, often leads to specialization and "well-run but ungoverned" agencies or governments (Lowi, 1967, p. 86). The danger under traditional education governance arrangements stems from narrowly focused actors concentrating on issues like job and program protection while ignoring outside factors or solutions unrelated to their technical expertise (Lowi, 1967; Smrekar & Mawhinney, 1999). These dynamics make efforts to link schools and service providers more difficult. Thus, shifts to general-purpose arrangements promote institutional politics that move beyond insular focus.

Second, moves away from single-issue politics suggest a broader change in how American governance conceptualizes responsibility for education policy. Henig (2013) argues that shifts in political environments over recent decades have ended education policy's "exceptionalism," or its privileged status as separate from general-purpose governments. Rather, the prevalent role of outside-school factors influencing and influenced by education draws these general-purpose actors into education policymaking. Further, the opening of policy venues for reform at municipal, state, and federal levels suggests education increasingly resembles general-purpose governments that control other policy areas.

Collaborations may more easily evolve under general-purpose governments because incentives exist for mayors, governors, city councils, and legislatures to pursue them. While spillover effects cause schools to be influenced by a host of other social influences, inextricably linking schools to their communities, the link functions in both directions—communities realize spillover benefits when schools achieve their goals. Especially in an era of fiscal belt-tightening, governments must squeeze as much benefit out of their dollars as possible. Recognizing such spillover effects holds potential to reframe education's relationship vis-à-vis other social services (Henig, 2013). Other collaborative benefits stem from the nature of general-purpose governing regimes because, as opposed to single-purpose governments, general-purpose governments require more broadly mobilized actors to mange affairs effectively. This broader regime can better identify the various issues influencing schools and mobilize different providers to tackle problems more efficiently and comprehensively than single-issue school governance.

More broadly, education's reabsorption into general-purpose governance arrangements may lead to a reconceptualization away from education as a school-only phenomenon. Beyond interest-group politics, various researchers highlight how these shifts have potential to draw

decision makers and service providers typically outside traditional school governance systems into education (Meier, 2004; Usdan, 2006). Although those responsible for health, youth development, or other services assisting students traditionally remain removed from education policy, new arrangements provide opportunities for comprehensive service collaborations with schools. While school boards can pursue policies to align education with other actors (and do, in some cases), mayors or city councils can make such discussions easier and more efficient (Henig, 2013).

**Factors promoting collaboration among organizations.** If political shifts, newly available policy levers, and education's potential redefinition make school-service collaborations more feasible, it then becomes important to understand organizational factors contributing to successful collaborations. Because this study focuses on whether and to what degree mayors help coordinate services, recognizing the organizational issues promoting collaborations highlights potential ways mayors may foster partnerships.

Work tying social service agencies together to benefit clients has many names: service coordination, service collaboration, service partnerships, wrap-around services, and service integration, to name a few. Even though these terms can mean different things, this study uses them interchangeably and will most frequently utilize "collaboration" to be consistent with interview participants.[3] In an early definitional attempt, the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (1972) broadly conceptualizes these types of initiatives as the linking "of

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[3] Briefly, coordination can be thought of as relationships where one organization disproportionately influences cooperative arrangements. Collaboration may entail more equally shared responsibility among partners for things such as planning, service provision, and data sharing. Meanwhile, integration might be seen as the most unified incarnation, where partner organizations become fully intertwined to the point where distinctions between them may be difficult. For fuller discussions of these nuances, see Austin (1997), and Crowson and Boyd (1996).

two or more service providers to allow treatment of an individual's or family's needs in a more coordinated and comprehensive manner" (p. 16). More detailed definitions prove elusive due not only to potentially different meanings to terms, but also to different collaboration access points and foci. Collaborations may be accessed by or target clients (e.g. reforming case management), programs (e.g. information sharing among partners), organizations (e.g. consolidation), or policies (e.g. reforming funding from categorical to block-grants) (Agranoff & Pattakos, 1979; Kagan & Neville, 1993). Each of these entry points may also lend themselves to a focus on practice (e.g. leadership style) or administration (e.g. shared norms and values) (Austin, 1997; Dryfoos, 1998; Kagan & Neville, 1993).

Identifying traits inherent to all collaborations proves difficult due to these varied components. However, research on collaborations outlines how four broad actions promote success: 1) setting clear and aligned goals, 2) creating collaborative environments, 3) altering administrative arrangements, and 4) strengthening accountability for collaborations. While examples given throughout this section highlight these four issues from organizational perspectives, it should be noted that each feature may also play a role in the other target levels identified above (Agranoff & Pattakos, 1979; Kagan & Neville, 1993). Therefore, examples below do not mean to imply that administrative arrangements can or should only be altered at the organizational level; rather, they were chosen because organizational issues are most relevant to this study.

First, clearly stated and specific goals shared by various actors help collaborations. When highlighting research on collaborative failures in the 1960s and 1970s, Waldfogel (1997) explains that in the past these initiatives often suffered from vaguely stated goals. Other research suggests that strong leadership can break down a fundamental barrier to collaboration by

aligning agency missions and creating coherent direction among agencies (Page, 2003). Given inherent difficulties to coordinated work, a shared plan detailing common end-points provides crucial direction to keep initiatives unified as difficulties arise.

Second, work environments may be altered to improve collaborations. Page (2003) finds organizational cultures can promote partnership by providing forums for idea sharing that encourage initiatives moving beyond typical organizational boundaries. Kagan and Neville (1993) also highlight instances of collocation as one way to change organizational environments. Under such arrangements, agencies working together become more geographically accessible to each other and to clients by, for example, moving to the same building. Such changes reduce the effort needed to interact with partners while enabling responsive alterations to collaborative activity when necessary.

Third, administrative arrangements can be altered to promote collaboration. For example, arranging funding in ways that break down artificial divisions, like replacing categorical funding streams with block grants, may foster a collaborative dynamic (Page, 2003; Waldfogel, 1997). Waldfogel (1997) also explains consolidation of multiple agencies into a single entity or by creating codified agreements among agencies can build partnerships. Similarly, joint planning processes among collaborators modify administrative arrangements and build bonds between formerly disjointed providers (Kagan & Neville, 1993). As new collaborations solidify, involving on-the-ground personnel in planning processes can further legitimate new administrative arrangements by creating street-level buy-in. Such buy-in can lessen implementation deviations from collaborative plans, which could be otherwise imposed in top-down fashion and without practitioner input. Further, such inclusions can also produce an influx

of different perspectives that may strengthen collaborative efforts (Bryson, Crosby, & Stone, 2006).

Finally, strong accountability systems that hold parties responsible for collaboration can benefit partnerships. Beyond collecting data on programmatic inputs and outputs, such accountability data provide agencies with frequent feedback about their actions and allow for adaptation (Bryson, Crosby, & Stone, 2006). Other successful accountability system features include data availability and operational transparency to provide for a system of checks among partners. These features build interagency trust as well as enable joint problem solving (Page, 2003). Further, performance management literature often highlights an actor's propensity to focus on tasks for which she is held accountable (e.g. Moynihan, 2008), something that education scholars similarly find (e.g. Booher-Jennings, 2005). Thus, efforts to enhance collaboration may not meet goals unless partners are accountable for their actions.

Given that collaborations may falter at multiple points in their life-cycle, one may wonder why schools provide an optimal locus for efforts to improve children's lives. After all, school districts are behemoths; elementary and secondary districts alone comprise roughly one third of all state and local employment (Henig, 2013). However, schools serve as the natural linkage point due to their compulsory nature and ubiquity as a community institution (Smrekar & Mawhinney, 1999). Especially in low-income neighborhoods, few institutions remain that engage communities broadly (Weir, 1992). One comprehensive review, using collaborations that focus on child social, emotional, and cognitive competencies as microcosm, finds that 88 percent of those collaborations with positive evaluations had some focus on the school setting (Catalano et al., 2002). Therefore, the appropriate question may not be *whether* collaborations should include schools, but instead *how* to promote school-service partnerships.

Although improving the organizational issues common to working with other service providers highlights some ways to strengthen school-service partnerships, these alone are not enough. Even if initiatives operate well along those dimensions listed above, they may remain narrowly focused and do little to alter the ways in which schools interact with outsiders broadly. Within education, the literature on shifting political environments suggests that moving beyond programmatic success requires changes in how education policy relates to other political realms. When considering education institutions, one reform specifically attempts to reshape the boundaries in which education operates: mayoral control of schools.

**The theory behind mayoral control.** While broader reabsorption of education politics into general-purpose governance creates possibilities for collaboration among school and non-school actors, no formal authority supports this potential. Although these shifts may spur partnerships, formal arrangements may make collaborations more likely or may help them evolve more successfully. Since the 1980s, scholars argue that formal changes to education governance structures may be needed to overcome the organizational issues endemic to collaboration with schools (Heath & McLaughlin, 1987). One reform, mayoral control of schools, presents the most complete and formal deconstruction of governance barriers between education and other social policies. Initiatives to give mayors authority over education are also predicated, at least in part, on their ability to foster collaboration to benefit citizens.

Mayors since 1990 are thought to be part of a "new, improved" breed of executive. Unlike "civil rights" mayors from 1970 to 1990 who largely protected status quos in their cities while concentrating on broader national agendas, new executives altered course when confronted with deteriorating fiscal conditions and changing political environments (Kirst & Bulkley, 2000). These executives had managerial prowess and a willingness to confront all issues important to

the city's public management. Education, as the largest institution within most cities, was no exception. Mayoral control reforms gave these new mayors formal authority with which to manage education.

Overall, four theoretical benefits undergird mayoral control. Theory presumes that it: 1) enhances democratic accountability, 2) broadens constituencies concerned with education, 3) improves stability and efficiency, and 4) facilitates service integration.

First, by placing education decision making in a clearly visible political office, reforms provide incentive for mayors to advance education initiatives on agendas (Chambers, 2006). Should the public be unhappy with mayoral education management, it may vote her out of office. Furthermore, mayors have incentive to use their powerful and very public roles to inject enthusiasm around reforms and provide complacent bureaucracies needed jolts (Henig & Rich, 2004; Kirst & Wirt, 2009). In these ways, mayors enjoy what Theodore Roosevelt famously called a "bully pulpit." Not only do traditionally elected school boards not have these advantages, they are also institutions where authority and responsibilities are shared (with superintendents). This allows for political finger pointing, potentially allowing board members to avoid blame because it may be hard to know who is responsible. Moreover, superintendents are not faced with democratic accountability, making any blame placed on that office hard to enforce. Conversely, mayoral control provides the public a clear party to support or blame (Chambers, 2006; Meier, 2004).

Second, a two-fold problem emerges when considering who elects school board members. Only a narrow slice of the public participates in these elections, where voter turnout might range between 4 and 30 percent (Allen & Plank, 2005) or average 18 to 20 percent (Shen, 2003). Resulting from this voter apathy, focused interests can exert disproportionate influence on

decisions about who sets education policy. One example is teachers union members, whose participation rate dwarfs overall voting rates, giving them disproportionate electoral influence (Moe, 2006, 2011; Taebel, 1977). This introduces a principal-agent problem where school agents (teachers) are directly responsible for selecting who sets policies affecting them. Thus, education policies increasingly focus narrowly on those issues directly influencing schools or their disproportionately powerful interest groups. Ceding control to mayors diminishes this traditional governance risk because a much larger segment of the population elects broadly focused offices like mayors (Henig, 2013). Research on mayoral elections confirms higher turnout, with average rates ranging from 26 to 34 percent and most recent estimates showing much higher rates in some cities (Holbrook & Weinschenk, 2014).

Third, given the leadership instability plaguing urban districts, mayoral control can provide stability and enhance efficiency. Hess (1999) finds that urban superintendents hold a given job for only three years, and in that time, the vast majority enact at least 10 major reforms within their districts. He also shows that school board members typically aspire for more ambitious political office, likely exacerbating policy churn as agendas and capacities more frequently change. Mayors, on the other hand, have at least four years to construct a coherent agenda. Further, policy generalists like mayors tend to prioritize and delegate tasks more effectively, thus increasing organizational efficiencies by allowing lower-level staff to complete initiatives and avoiding the micromanaging common in school districts (Meier, 2004; Cuban & Usdan, 2003).

Finally, in addition to and partially resulting from the other three theoretical benefits (and most important to this study), mayors are better positioned than traditional school districts to foster collaboration among schools and other social services providers. Mayors can promote

stable agendas that place an emphasis on service collaborations with schools (Meier, 2004). In fact, it may be advantageous for mayors to do so. Given spillover effects, both where strong schools benefit communities and where healthy communities benefit schools, mayors have incentive to mobilize actors across sectors to improve their cities holistically (Henig, 2013). These same spillover effects also provide incentive for a mayor's electorate to hold her accountable for all services—if one service falters, others may also suffer. Without mayoral control, however, mayors have less incentive to pursue school affairs and potentially face structural governing barriers that fuel resignation from education policy. Insular and hard-to-change bureaucracies, such as school districts, make collaborative reforms challenging in even the best circumstances. Therefore, mayoral efforts under traditional governance are likely to face prolonged difficulties and little direct reward.

Beyond incentives, mayoral authority over many relevant services in most cities (e.g. health department, parks and recreation) provides her with formal avenues to compel cross-agency partnerships (Henig, 2009a). Indeed, research on inter-agency partnership shows that formal authority over collaborators can aid service integration efforts (Agranoff, 1991; Bryson, Crosby, & Stone, 2007). In less direct ways, mayors are also more adept than single-issue school boards at mobilizing elites and garnering resources while also fostering broader agenda support (Marschall & Shah, 2005; Stone, Henig, Jones, & Pierannunzi, 2001). These factors can indirectly support service collaborations by drawing more resources and attention to schools and their collaborations.

Mayoral control is a governance change that most formally captures shifts in education's political environments and alters education's relation to other policy areas. Furthermore, in reducing barriers between schools and other services, mayoral education authority benefits

collaboration's four organizational factors: 1) Mayors can align formerly single-issue school agendas with those multi-issue agendas that they traditionally pursue. 2) Mayors are better positioned to appropriate or mobilize financial and capacity resources to aid collaborations. 3) Mayors have managerial expertise and cachet that, when coupled with formal power, present opportunities to create or restructure organizations to foster collaborations. And 4) Mayors not only provide stable accountability for collaboration through their oversight of agencies, but the public is more able to ensure its decision makers are held accountable for results.

**Formal and informal powers.** Leaders like mayors have both formal and informal powers. As this study is most concerned with mayoral control as a formal policy, an important distinction exists between those powers formally granted to mayors when switching governance and those powers mayors would have even without legislated education authority. Leadership is not only about powers and authorities vested into offices. Instead, leaders must also worry about both *what* they can do, as well as *how* they can do it. Breaking authority into formal, or what mayors can do, and informal, how they do it, is at some level disingenuous. No reasonably aware observer believes a mayor has success exercising only her formal powers or only via her charisma or leadership style. Instead, they play off each other.

Governance reform cannot account for many informal ways mayors influence policy. It cannot predict mayoral attitudes towards institutions, actors, or even policies. What it can do is rearrange the conditions facing mayors. Formal governance change theoretically benefits school-service collaborations because it enables new policy levers and provides *new* sources of formal authority in ways that can spur action. This study investigates whether and to what degree mayors use those levers and sources in ways that they otherwise could not if governance reforms

had not occurred. The following distinction is not exhaustive, but provides some useful examples about those actions that might be considered formal or informal powers.

Many formal powers are administrative. Lowi (1964) finds one of the most important ways mayors influence policy is through their appointment responsibilities. The ability to ensure their vision's pursuit by appointing personnel who will enact preferred policies, or remove those not working toward mayoral goals, helps unify city policy systems. Subsequent studies similarly identify this as an important formal mayoral authority (e.g. Svara, 1990). Other administrative abilities also serve as sources of power. Through their budget preparation and administration, mayors help control which priorities receive necessary resources (Stoker & Wolman, 1992). By nature of their position, mayors might also be automatically placed on boards as an *ex officio* member, thus giving them formal ways to influence that board's direction (Svara, 1990). Mayors in some places may also be able to call special meetings of other official bodies, like the city council, and might hold the power to veto or make executive orders in strong mayor systems (Morgan & Watson, 1996; Svara, 1990). Cumulatively, Morgan and Watson (1996) provide a noteworthy and concise categorization, saying formal power "normally consists of those features of an executive office established by constitution, charter, or law" (p. 116).

Agenda setting powers may or may not fall within the above definition and could be formal or informal. For example, a mayor may hold the power to formally set city council's agenda for a legislative session granted by a city's charter. This could be considered a formal agenda setting power, because mayors narrow scope for other bodies in formal proceedings. Literature on mayors often struggles to make this distinction between formal and informal agenda setting, but work in other fields makes this separation. For example, writing about international political systems, Pollack (1997) describes how formal agenda authority might flow

through the power to propose legislation, which shapes another body's procedures and choices. In the mayor's case, the ability to make formal proposals to the city council shapes these areas by defining the issues a council must consider and the way they must allocate their procedural time. Informal agenda setting powers, however, can be thought of as one's ability to set substantive agendas absent monopolistic ways to do so (Pollack, 1997). Rather than a mayor's ability to make a policy proposal by virtue of her office, she must instead rely on her expertise and ability to mobilize support among other actors to manipulate the issues that receive agenda attention.

Beyond informal agenda setting, mayors also hold other informal powers. Morgan and Watson (1996) again provide a concise definition to contrast with their formal power explanation presented above. They classify informal powers as those "behaviors or traits primarily of incumbent office holders that enable such officials to broker agreements and build political coalitions" (p. 116). They continue to provide examples where mayors act as ceremonial representative with bodies holding power locally, statewide, or with the media due to their status as a public figure. Furthermore, mayors may use their leadership styles and traits (e.g. charisma, collaborative style) to help form coalitions that are able to shape policies (Stoker & Wolman, 1992; Stone, 1995). The range of informal powers defies concise explanation, and interactions among formal and informal power might sometimes be hard to disentangle. Thus, the most useful distinction between the two likely remains whether law provides the tools used.

**Conflicts and opportunities within the literature.** Mayors may use both informal and formal levers when seeking to build school-service collaborations. Informally, they may use their public status to direct attention to school issues and do so in ways showing the intertwined nature of school problems. For example, a mayor might use a television appearance to call on private hospital leaders, school leaders, and other social services to develop school-based health clinics.

Formally, when provided governing authority over schools, mayors might include budget items that fund coordinated services in schools. They might also replace administrators failing to enact the mayor's collaborative mission, or coerce them to do so by threat of replacement. This last example shows how informal and formal powers might interact—coercion may not be effective if administrators know mayors have no formal avenue to replace them.

Literature on mayoral power also highlights an existing tension between education literature, where mayors are categorized as exceedingly strong, and urban politics literature, which often shows a constrained mayor. Stone (1995) explains:

> Particularly at the local level, governmental authority commands only modest resources. Energetic governance requires more than office holding alone can provide. The weakness of formal authority thus gives added importance to the personal leadership of prominent urban actors, especially in the loosely structured context of local politics in America. (p. 96)

Weak formal authority stems from state and federal mandates that limit what cities control (Nivola, 2002). Further, political power shifts toward suburban interests and the erosion of city economic bases hinder urban abilities to advocate their interests with state or federal lawmakers. These problems are further compounded by difficulties in forging urban-suburban coalitions to strengthen advocacy power (Weir, Wolman, & Swanstrom, 2005). Given these constraints, research suggests limited mayoral policy influence when authorities overlap, as in social or tax policy (Gerber & Hopkins, 2011). Urban education systems present a similar web of mandates, overlapping authorities, and diminished ability to singularly influence policy. Considering all these potential limits, assertions that mayoral control holds potential to alter education policy drastically may be overblown within education policy literature.

The literature on mayoral control remains lacking in two key respects. First, research on mayoral control has to this point focused on reasons for governance change, how specific mayors manage and interact with education policy, community responses to mayoral control, or evaluations of the correlation between mayoral control and student outcomes (e.g. Cibulka & Boyd, 2003; Chambers, 2006; Henig & Rich, 2004; Viteritti, 2009; Wong, Shen, Anagnostopoulos, & Rutledge, 2007). In so doing, the literature provides findings on three of the four theoretical reasons for mayoral control: democratic repercussions, constituencies involved in education, and reform stability and efficiency. However, literature on whether and how mayors shape collaborative environments is sparse. Some research touches on these themes in a limited way (e.g. Usdan & Cuban, 2003), although these studies sometimes highlight programmatic existence rather than the ways mayors shape political environments within their cities to promote collaborative success, sustainability, and scalability.

Second, literature often glosses over potential tensions within mayoral control's logic. For example, benefits to stability and efficiency due to mayoral authority may be undermined by democratic accountability. Although a mayor may benefit schools, she may also be held accountable for other areas—stagnant job growth may lead to her ouster despite popular education policies. Should the new mayor have education goals in opposition with the previous mayor, the new agenda may destabilize education policy. Another tradeoff exists when mayoral priorities run counter to collaborative needs. For example, research suggests mayoral leadership corresponds with reduced administrative spending and increased resource flow to instruction and instructional support (Wong et al., 2007). Although channeling resources in these ways may help schools, such activity may also undermine collaborations should narrower focus on classroom actions divert resources away from parts of the organization building partnerships.

This study reconciles many of the issues discussed in this section. It addresses gaps in the literature by specifically investigating mayoral control as a method to foster school-service collaborations. It also pays special attention to differences among formal and informal powers. It contributes to the literature by providing evidence that the issues facing collaboration in mayoral control and traditionally governed districts are the same, even though mayoral control should theoretically help overcome these barriers. Findings about mayoral roles in supporting school-service collaboration suggest one reason why this may be the case: mayors may not be using the formal powers when available to them, thus weakening theoretical assumptions about governance reform. This study concludes by discussing potential tensions within mayoral control's logic and between this logic and other urban politics literature.

**CHAPTER 2: Methods**

This study unfolds in two parts. Part 1 uses content analysis and a longitudinal set of State of the City speeches to learn whether mayors discuss education as part of their policy agenda. It also compares how mayors in mayoral control and non-mayoral control cities discuss these issues. Part 2 uses case studies to investigate Providence, Rhode Island, which has mayoral control, and traditionally governed Rochester, New York. In each city, interview data highlight the political contexts shaping school-service collaborations and describe mayoral involvement in these two cities.

**Part 1: Assessing Mayoral Agendas**

 **Part 1 data.** To assess mayoral agendas, this study uses annual State of the City speeches (SOC) from 2008 to 2012. Similar to the President's State of the Union Address, these speeches outline a mayor's policy initiatives for the coming year. Although such a speech is not always titled a State of the City—it may be supplanted by an inaugural address and some places rely on budget addresses accompanying annual fiscal proposals—it is by far most common name. This piece uses "State of the City" to encompass all annual mayoral agenda speeches. These addresses provide yearly snapshots of a mayor's and city's accomplishments and initiatives. By gathering these speeches over five years, this study seeks to insulate findings from brief agenda fluctuations and develop a clearer picture of these cities' priorities.

 This piece uses SOC speeches because they can be compared across cities due to their similar format nation wide. Further, other research on mayoral agendas under different governance similarly uses them. For example, Portz (2004) investigates whether Boston's mayors discussed education in SOC speeches to similar degrees before and after gaining mayoral control, finding that addresses devoted much more time to education following governance

change. Other research focuses on the degree to which mayors highlight specific policy issues such as school choice (Wong, Shen, & Pachucki, 2006; Shen, Wong, & Hartney, 2011).

Research also suggests that mayoral agendas can correspond with policy change. Portz (2004) finds that education spending as proportion of Boston's general fund increased under mayoral control and corresponded with increased agenda attention. In a broader study of mayoral influence on policy, Hopkins and McCabe (2012) analyze the share of city funds going to certain policy areas. They use SOC addresses to confirm other analyses, concluding that spending correlates with emphasis mayors place on specific policy areas. Findings from these studies highlight how agenda attention, as shown through SOC speeches, may translate into tangible policy action. Therefore, SOC messages represent an opportunity to examine a potential precursor to policy initiative.

**Part 1 sample.** This study borrows sampling strategies from past research. To allow for comparisons among different governance types, Wong et al. (2007) utilize a sampling strategy that identifies school districts that are most similar to those found in mayoral control cities. Overall, they employ five rules: 1) to control for contiguous political boundaries, the district cannot be part of a supervisory union that provides services to multiple jurisdictions, 2) the district must serve a central city of a Metropolitan Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA), 3) the district must have at least 40 schools, 4) the district must receive at least 75 percent of its students from the city it serves, and 5) the city must send at least 75 percent of its students to the same school district. Using these rules, a set of 104 comparable districts emerges (Wong et al., 2007). This research considers these 104 cities and the addition noted below, for a total of 105 cities. The full list of cities may be found in Appendix A, and a more thorough description of these rules may be found in Wong et al. (2007, pp. 54-55).

In total, the set represents 347 State of the City speeches. This total reflects numerous data collection obstacles. For example, not every city gives a speech or has publicly available records. Thirteen of the 105 cities had no available speeches, meaning this study considers only speeches from the other 92 cities (see Appendix A for a list of those without available speeches). Within these 92 cities, sometimes speeches were simply unavailable to the public. Further, upon speaking with mayoral staff in many cities, it became apparent that many mayors forego prepared remarks and therefore leave no written record.[4] This data set also excludes other formats, such as video or written city annual reports that supplant speeches. These formats may shift the forum into something more expansive than a written speech, and other issues like vocal inflection may prove suggestive in ways not available in written speech.[5] Although these various other formats informed the coding scheme, analyses only considered written speech records in attempts to put each speech on an equal footing and protect against skewed results.

*Mayoral control sample.* Table 1, based on a similar table in past research (Henig, 2009a, p. 23), highlights cities that have or had mayoral control, the powers afforded mayors, and any important changes to governance arrangements.

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[4] While many different circumstances prevented speech collection, these were the most common. The following are some examples of common issues: Some cities do not have annual speeches that serve SOC functions (e.g. Shreveport, Amarillo). Even in cities that do have SOC, at times these speeches simply will not happen (e.g. a city employee in Newport News explained that speeches did not occur in 2009 and 2012). Staff in other cities explained that speeches sent for archival were unavailable to me, such as Charlotte Mayor McRory's 2008 speech. Also common were mayors who gave speeches, but did not prepare remarks (e.g. Oakland Mayor Quan in 2012).

[5] For example, the San Francisco Mayor's Office told me that in 2008 Mayor Newsom did not give a traditional speech but instead posted a series of YouTube videos. These videos combined totaled over seven hours and therefore could include significantly more information than a traditional speech. Written reports were often lengthy and much more detailed than a traditional speech (e.g. Pueblo's 2012 report covers 64 printed pages).

**Table 1.** Mayoral Control in Different Cities

| City | Dates | Mayoral Powers |
|---|---|---|
| Baltimore | Historical, changed 1997- | Mayor and Gov. jointly appoint school board. |
| Boston [a] | 1992-, reaffirmed by referendum in 1996 | Mayor appoints board, board appoints superintendent. |
| Chicago [a] | Historical, renewed 1995- | Mayor appoints board, board appoints superintendent. |
| Cleveland [a] | 1998-, reaffirmed by referendum in 2002 | Mayor appoints board, board appoints superintendent. |
| Detroit | 1999-2004 | When in place, mayor appointed 6/7 board, board appointed superintendent. Reverted to traditional governance following referendum. Now managed by state. |
| Harrisburg [b] | 2000- | Mayor appoints board, board appoints superintendent. |
| Hartford [a c] | 2005- | Mayor appoints 5/9 board members, board hires superintendent. Mayor named self to board, 2005. |
| Jackson, MS | Historical | Mayor appoints board. City council approves. |
| New Haven | Historical | Mayor appoints board. |
| New York City [a] | 2002- | Mayor appoints majority of the board (minority appointed by borough presidents), Mayor appoints superintendent (Chancellor). |
| Oakland | 2000, state intervention 2003- | Mayor appointed minority (3/10). |
| Philadelphia | Historical, state partnership 2001- | Mayor appoints 2/5 board members, Governor appoints 3/5. |
| Providence [a] | 1980- | Mayor appoints board, board appoints superintendent. |
| Trenton [b] | 1978– | Mayor appoints board, board appoints superintendent. |
| Washington, D.C. [a] | Partial 2000, full 2007- | Mayor appoints chancellor. Board now analogous to a state board of education. |

[a] These cities are included in mayoral control characterizations for analytic purposes due to the relative strength of mayoral powers and their shift to mayoral control during the last fifth of the 20th century.
[b] These cities are excluded due to their small district size.
[c] Past research did not include Hartford because it had 33 schools, not the minimum 40 (Wong et al., 2007). Hartford now has over 50 schools and is included given its relevance as a "new" mayoral control city.

This study includes eight cities in its mayoral control subset: Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Hartford, New York City, Providence, and Washington, D.C. To be considered in this set, a mayoral control city had to meet the following criteria.

1. The district meets the decision rules for inclusion in the broader sample outlined above.

2. Mayors currently appoint the superintendent and/or a majority of the school board to ensure they have formal authority to pursue their policies.

3. Mayors gained control in 1975 or later. Research suggests that the "new breed" of mayors taking control at the end of the 20th century differs in managerial ability and interest in education. Limiting to these mayoral control cities increases the likelihood that governance arrangements evolved out of ability and desire to change educational systems rather than historical precedent (Kirst & Bulkley, 2000; Henig & Rich, 2004). Furthermore, this period also aligns with the reabsorption of education policy into general-purpose governance and the rise of executive involvement in education policy (Henig, 2013). Therefore, while Jackson, Mississippi, and New Haven, Connecticut, have long-standing mayoral authority and are part of the overall set, they are not considered part of mayoral control set.

**Part 1 analyses.** Appendix B details the coding scheme applied to each of the 374 available speeches. To accurately code the different collaborative issues mayors may discuss, these codes were first deductively derived based on a survey of service collaboration literature. Then, codes were inductively modified based on a sampling of mayoral SOC speeches to better encompass the ways speeches highlight topics related to research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Once complete, two colleagues unrelated to the project applied the final coding scheme to two randomly selected speeches. To test for clarity, functionality, and validity, comparisons

among all coded speeches yielded an inter-rater reliability of over 75 percent across coders. This strongly suggests that the scheme is reliable and insulated from individual level coding variation.

Using qualitative software (Dedoose) analyses focus on two questions as part of this section's overarching mayoral agenda inquiries: 1) Do mayors discuss education and service collaboration in agenda speeches and, if so, to what degree? And 2) Given theoretical advantages to mayoral control, do mayors with more authority advance agendas that include education and collaboration more frequently and with more detail than mayors in non-mayoral control cities?

To answer the first question, I tabulate data by speech. From these 374 speeches, I am able to make conclusions about how frequently mayors talk about education, service collaborations overall, and service collaboration with detail. I also create code co-occurrence matrices to show, in those excerpts where mayors discuss collaborations, which collaborators are also mentioned. To compare mayoral control and non-mayoral control cities, I employ Mann-Whitney statistical tests to compare average number of codes while correcting for unequal sample sizes and non-normal distributions.

**Part 2: Analyzing Environments Shaping Collaboration**

Following State of the City analyses, this study's second part investigates environments influencing school collaborations through case studies in two cities, Providence, RI, and Rochester, NY. The remainder of this section describes how these sites were selected and how this study's design allows for comparisons to be drawn between cities and conclusions drawn about the potential roles governance plays in collaborative arrangements.

**Part 2 city selection.** Based on coding results from Part 1, case selection employs the following decision rules. These rules help ensure that case study cities remain similar on a host of issues but differ by education governance arrangements. In so doing, case selection seeks to

eliminate potential sources of variation that could influence collaborative environments and
isolate governance structure, the variable of interest.

1. The city must have at least three coded speeches. The ebb and flow of issues addressed in
   mayoral speeches are not always consistent, and while extrapolation from fewer speeches
   can occur, setting a minimum helps eliminate bias. 77 cities qualify under this rule.

2. When grouping by city, the total number of K-12 education codes must be at least one
   standard deviation higher than the mean to focus specifically on those cities where
   education is most frequently an issue. From the 77 cities identified by the first rule, 14
   also meet this criterion.

3. Similar to rule two, the total number of instances where mayors in a given city discussed
   collaboration with schools while also including detailed information must be at least one
   standard deviation above the mean. This rule limits analyses to those places with
   strongest measured commitment to school-service collaborations. From the 14 remaining
   after the first two decision rules, six cities remain: Cleveland, OH, Newark, NJ, Portland,
   OR, Providence, RI, Rochester, NY, and Washington, D.C.

4. The primary variable of interest in Part 2 is whether and to what degree mayoral control
   cities differ from non-mayoral control cities in their pursuit of service collaboration.
   Therefore, case studies must explore both governance contexts. Three of the possible six
   (Cleveland, Providence, and D.C.) have mayoral control while the other three do not.
   Case selection focuses on one from each list.

5. These six also vary in ways that could influence political environments. For example,
   past work explores the ways in which racial contexts influence school operation (e.g.
   Henig & Rich, 2004). With one exception (Portland), each district's nonwhite population,

as a percentage of its total enrollment, is above 85 percent.[6] Meanwhile, Portland's figure

is 44 percent, thus eliminating it from consideration. Newark also has a unique political

characteristic leading to its exclusion: The state of New Jersey has controlled Newark

schools since 1995.

6. As leadership can play an important role in getting social services agencies to collaborate,

the issue of mayoral turnover may influence case study findings. It may be that as

executives change, so too do priorities that influence service integration. Therefore, in

attempts to minimize the effect turnover might have on findings, cities with similar

leadership contexts should be chosen. Within the five remaining cities, one had the same

mayor 2008-2012 for Part 1's entire timeframe (Cleveland) and is excluded. The other

three (Rochester, Providence, and D.C.) had similar mayoral tenures. For each, one

mayor gave speeches in 2008-2010 while a different mayor gave speeches for 2011 and

2012.

7. Finally, among the remaining three cities, Rochester and Providence are similar

according to numerous variables. As Table 2 describes below, both cities are similarly

mid-sized cities, each has a district with similar enrollment as proportion of city

population, and each city and district have similarly proportioned nonwhite populations.[7]

Chapter 4 further explains longer term trends in these cities, showing that both lost much

of their population since their mid 20th century peaks, and each district's performance

faces lagging student performance. Therefore, these two become the focus for case

studies.

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[6] Figure from 2011-2012 NCES Common Core of Data.
[7] While similar in total nonwhite population, Rochester is heavily black while Providence is heavily Latino. Although this introduces variation, it was outweighed by many similarities.

**Table 2.** Rochester and Providence Demographics, City and School

| | Rochester | | Providence | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *City* | *School District* | *City* | *School District* |
| **Population/Enrollment** | 210,565 [a] | 30,489 [b] | 178,042 [a] | 23,241 [b] |
| **% Non-Hispanic White** | 37.6 [a] | 10.2 [b] | 37.6 [a] | 8.9 [b] |
| **% Non-Hispanic Black** | 39.6 [a] | 62.1 [b] | 13.1 [a] | 18.6 [b] |
| **% Hispanic** | 16.4 [a] | 24.1 [b] | 38.1 [a] | 63.4 [b] |
| **% Poverty/Free or Reduced Price Lunch** | 31.6 [c] | 90.1 [b] | 27.9 [c] | 82.4 [b] |

[a] 2010 U.S. Census; [b] 2011-2012 NCES Common Core of Data; [c] 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**Part 2 data.** Prior to interviews, key document sources informed a broader understanding of each city's context. First, searching each city's widest circulating newspaper (*The Providence Journal* and *The Democrat and Chronicle*, in Providence and Rochester, respectively) from 2008 onward highlighted collaborations and important linkages between education and non-education actors. Searches occurred through each outlet's website and used searched terms made by matching one word from each of two sets ("school," "service," or "social service") plus ("collaboration," "coordination," "partnership"), for a total of nine search terms. School and city budgets were also gathered and examined for any data on service collaborations, be they programmatic descriptions, budgetary figures, or other information (e.g. budgets may include a letter of transmittal from preparer to recipient and may include pertinent information). Finally, all publicly available regular school board minutes since 2008 (not special meetings) were reviewed for any potential insight to collaboration among schools and other service providers. Programs and organizations identified through this process eventually became recruitment targets.

Case study data come primarily from semi-structured interviews with relevant informants in each city. In total, 22 interviews inform this study—10 in Providence and 12 in Rochester. Each interview was scheduled for 30 to 45 minutes and most were done in person during visits to each city in spring 2014, though five happened via telephone due to scheduling conflicts. These

interviews focused on individual backgrounds, facets that helped or hindered collaboration, comparison between collaborations involving schools and those without school involvement, involvement from the mayor or mayor's office, and informant thoughts about opportunities for mayoral involvement (see Appendix C for full interview protocol). During each interview, field notes highlighted key points and kept record of important inflections or non-auditory data. Following discussions, these notes were expanded and refined to most fully capture salient elements from each meeting. All but one interview consented to audio recording, though many intermittently asked for anonymity. Upon their conclusion, interviews were transcribed, checked for accuracy, and analyzed for overlapping themes.

 **Part 2 informant selection.** The sampling strategy targeted three groups of individuals. First, recruitment aimed at top school district and city leadership. Second, any individuals in city government or school districts whose job titles or job descriptions (if available) implied service collaboration received interview requests. Finally, based on the background review of school board minutes, news articles, and other organizational documents, leadership in those collaborative programs or organizations highlighted most frequently became sampling targets. For example, the Providence Children and Youth Cabinet and the Rochester Area Community Foundation arose frequently in background research. Leadership from these and similarly identified groups became the final initial recruitment group. All recruitment requests were sent to individuals directly, but if auto replies forwarded recruitment requests toward assistants, those requests were followed.

 After initial recruitment, unresponsive targets received up to three follow-up requests. Some targets declined while others forwarded me on to other individuals in their organizations, who then also received up to three interview requests. Additionally, I employed two different

types of snowball sampling. First, especially responsive targets were probed for further suggestions, often obliging with a few additional names. If background research showed these recommended individuals as potentially knowledgeable, they became targets. Finally, I ended each interview by asking for suggested contacts. I reached out to these new targets if more than one informant identified the same potential interviewee and subsequent background research confirmed relevance.

Table 3 describes informant affiliations. In both cities, recruitment targeted top district staff. While I was unable to recruit either superintendent, I secured other staff affiliated with each district. In both cities, I spoke with the staff members most engaged in building outside collaborations as identified by the processes above. Further, other informants also suggested these contacts, confirming that my recruitment targeted most relevant district staff. Additionally, in Rochester, I interviewed both a school board member (and past President), as well as the current Chief of Staff, whose job description explicitly describes her as liaison to city government (she also formerly served as Deputy Mayor). In Providence, I met with the director of United Providence, a shared-governance arrangement between Providence Public School District (PPSD) and the Providence Teachers Union. While this position is not strictly affiliated with the district, I consider it most closely related to school employees. In total, two informants in Providence and four in Rochester were most closely affiliated with the school district.

Recruitment also targeted mayoral and city agency staff. Neither current nor former mayors were able or willing to meet, and I was unable to obtain access to current mayoral staff in Providence. This may be unsurprising given Mayor Taveras was, at the time, in the midst of a gubernatorial run. However, I was able to meet with Mayor Taveras' former education advisor, a position that has yet to be filled since her departure from the mayor's office. In Rochester, I

interviewed the Chief of Staff to Mayor Warren (who took office in January 2014). I also

identified the Department of Recreation and Youth Services as a potential collaborator with

Rochester City School District (RCSD) and interviewed an Assistant Commissioner. In total, one

Providence interview came from city government while two Rochester city government officials

informed this study.

**Table 3.** Informant Positions

| Providence (10) | Rochester (12) |
|---|---|
| *School District (2)* | *School District (4)* |
|   Dir. of Strategic Community Partnership |   Superintendent's Chief of Staff |
|   Dir., United Providence |   School board member |
| *City (1)* |   Dir. of Innovation |
|   Former senior edu. advisor to mayor |   Dir. of Strategic Partnerships |
| *Non-Profit (5)* | *City (2)* |
|   Exec. Dir., Prov. Children and Youth Cabinet |   Mayor's Chief of Staff |
|   Local non-profit directors (2) |   Ast. Commissioner, Rec. and Youth Svcs. |
|   Local non-profit executive staff (2) | *Non-Profit (5)* |
| *Outside (2)* |   Dir., Roc. Area Community Fdn. |
|   Evaluator, Providence Full Svc. Comm. Sch. (2) |   Local non-profit directors (2) |
| |   Local non-profit executive staff (2) |
| | *County (1)* |
| |   Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau |

Each city also presents unique actors. For example, Providence has no city service

departments. Given Rhode Island's small size, these organizations are aggregated at broader

levels (e.g. state-wide). That means the most relevant actors in Providence were not agency

heads, but local non-profit leaders. Thus, six informants came from this sector, though one had

most recently worked in PPSD (the director of the Providence Children and Youth Cabinet). I

also spoke with two outside evaluators for the Providence Full Service Community Schools

program (which is described further in Chapter 4). In Rochester, I spoke with four non-profit

directors or executive staff, including the director of an area foundation. Rochester's final

informant defied classification; she had many crosscutting roles at the city, county, and within

RCSD. For categorization purposes, she is described as a county youth bureau staff.

**Part 2 analyses.** The analysis process began immediately following each interview when I expanded upon and refined field notes taken during discussions. These notes helped me develop an initial coding scheme that added more layers to those issues shown in literature to influence collaboration. The coding scheme was further expanded and refined during the transcript verification process. Overall, codes targeted those issues raised as helping or hindering collaborative environments in these cities, the locus of such issues (e.g. which organizations), the level within organizations (e.g. leadership), and whether informants mentioned mayoral involvement or mayoral control. I used Dedoose software to code all transcripts with the scheme found in Appendix D. Following coding, all excerpts were reexamined and refined to ensure accuracy. Similarly, I reviewed those most frequently applied codes and constructed findings based both on frequency and saliency of the issues raised by informants.

Although archival records shaped informant selection, these documents proved less helpful in triangulating findings. This largely stemmed from the content of interviews— informants, when explaining the issues influencing collaborative work, frequently focused on broader issues like political agendas and capacities influenced by staff or leadership turnover. Meanwhile, archival records, such as school board minutes and news coverage, almost exclusively highlighted program missions or processes and did not describe political environments. Therefore, the primary confirmatory mechanism came from issue prevalence across multiple participants.

Using these sources and methods, Chapter 3 highlights how mayors who have legal authority over education policy more frequently included education topics and service collaboration in their agenda speeches. Chapter 4 provides background on Rochester and Providence. Chapter 5 highlights the most common issues influencing school-service

collaborations in both cities and explains how mayoral control theoretically addresses each issue.

Chapter 6 describes common efforts to develop stable collaborative environments and suggests that mayoral involvement played a key role in Providence's relative success. However, Providence mayors did not operate in ways reliant on their formal education policy authority. Coupled with similar concerns about tying collaborative efforts to mayors in both cities, interview findings suggest limits to the ways mayors can benefit school-service collaborations.

**Critiques and Comparisons Enabled by this Design**

Two primary critiques may be levied against this design. One, common of many case studies, is the limited generalizability based on a two-case design. Case study designs are also necessarily endemic to studies of urban politics because policy development and implementation are heavily influenced by each place's given contexts. It is precisely because each city has unique features, interest groups, and personalities that make them interesting to study. Given constraints while doing research, I select two sites that are similar in many areas where differences may bias my findings (like size and racial composition). Further, both these cities have mayors who included collaborative messages relatively frequently. However, they differ in governance, my primary variable of interest. By selecting two cities where mayors frequently discuss school-service collaboration in their agenda speeches but differ in governance, comparative claims can be made about the degree to which formal powers drive mayoral involvement. While the cases do not generalize across populations, they provide critical context for current policy reforms. Finally, through the use of thick description, readers can determine the applicability of the findings to different contexts.

Participant selection may also bias this study because interview data drives many of its findings. Each informant has his or her own viewpoints that may influence the information

presented to me. This design protected against such threats to internal validity by triangulating findings via various data forms, including news reports, organizational documents, and semi-structured interviews. Further, I used member checks throughout interviews to clarify factual details and ascertain additional pertinent information. While I did not interview an exhaustive list in either city, the consistent patterns observed over interviews numbering in the double digits increases finding trustworthiness. Furthermore, purposive sampling helped identify informants from various organizations who are engaged in school-service collaborations in each city and can speak to mayoral involvement.

## CHAPTER 3: Mayoral Agendas

Mayors derive much power from their agenda setting advantage. For example, Portz (2004) shows that mayoral control in Boston corresponded with increased agenda focus on education issues. Furthermore, content qualitatively shifted to promote education as a city's foundation rather than tie it to other issues like employment (Portz, 2004). Similar to past work, this chapter examines annual State of the City addresses to better understand mayoral agendas. First, it investigates whether and to what degree mayors advance education policy. Second, it analyzes messages about service collaboration to see whether mayors provide cursory or detailed attention to these issues. Finally, to better understand education collaborations' relative importance to mayoral agendas, it compares education collaboration discussions to those including other actors.

Unlike previous work, this chapter draws on a broad and longitudinal data set to compare cities with traditional governance arrangements to those where mayors set education policy. Should mayoral control's theorized benefits to collaboration exist, one might expect mayors with authority over education to more frequently advance education and school collaboration in their agendas. This chapter provides evidence suggesting that mayors in mayoral control cities include education, service collaboration broadly, and school-service collaboration more frequently in their agendas than their counterparts in cities with traditional school governance.

### Education Agendas

While analyses consider K-12, higher, and early childhood education, mayors overwhelmingly focus on K-12 systems when discussing education issues. Table 4 shows how frequently mayors discuss K-12 education in their State of the City speeches. The "Total K-12 Ed." column shows that mayors discussed education 1,279 times across all 374 speeches. In comparison, mayors only highlighted higher education 442 times and early childhood education 32 times. Table 4's

final two columns to the right signify attention in non-mayoral control (non-MC) and mayoral control (MC) cities, respectively.

These figures show that all mayors, on average, advance education policy topics approximately three times per yearly speech. However, when analyzing the distribution of references to K-12 education, it becomes apparent that some speeches focus heavily on education topics, skewing average results. For example, Mayor Bloomberg's 2012 New York City speech mentions K-12 education topics at 28 different points, Rochester, NY, Mayor Duffy's 2010 speech targets education 22 times, and Rockford, IL, Mayor Morrissey's 2010 speech highlights education 18 times. Due to outliers such as these, the average code application figure far exceeds the median (two) and results in a relatively large standard deviation (3.98). Therefore, it is likely more meaningful to describe speech mentions at the median when examining K-12 discussions. When considering this measure, data show mayors discuss K-12 education approximately twice per year.[8]

**Table 4.** Mayoral Education Discussions

|  | Total K-12 Ed. (n=374) | Non-MC K-12 (n=340) | MC K-12 (n=34) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Total Codes** | 1,279 | 1,006 | 273 |
| **Mean** | 3.42 | 2.96 | 8.03 ** |
| **Median** | 2.00 | 2.00 | 7.00 |
| **S.D.** | 3.98 | 3.58 | 4.86 |

** $p < 0.01$

The medians in Table 4's right and middle columns show that mayors in mayoral control cities mention K-12 education roughly seven times per speech versus twice per speech for counterparts in cities with traditional school governance. Analyses use Mann-Whitney statistical tests for statistical differences accounting for unequal sample sizes and non-normal distributions.

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[8] In total, 31 outliers exist where mayors discussed education ten or more times. Nine were in mayoral control cities and 22 in non-mayoral control cities. The average drops from 3.42 to 2.52 when excluding these 31 cases, which aligns more closely with median descriptors.

Similar to disparities in medians and consistent with past research, these results suggest with high statistical likelihood ($p < 0.01$) that mayors with mayoral control discuss education more frequently than those in other cities.

**Service Collaboration Agendas**

Within K-12 education discussions, mayors also speak about service collaborations. Before turning to those times mayors include education actors in their collaborative dialogues, it is useful to highlight broader collaboration agendas to show how often partnership descriptions arise in yearly speeches.

       **Broader collaboration agendas.** Table 5 details how often mayors discuss service collaborations (SC). To show collaboration agendas broadly, these figures do not differentiate between actors mentioned and do not necessarily include education as partner. The first three columns include all mayoral collaboration descriptions with social services no matter the level of detail provided. Beyond cursory calls for working together or other nondescript language, these collaborative messages also include general statements like "Thanks to the efforts of our firefighters and our partnership with the Red Cross, there were five fire fatalities in 2010, the fewest fire deaths in Cleveland in 112 years" (Cleveland, OH, Mayor Jackson, 2011). These messages highlight some collaborative activity, but give no detail as to what specifically happened between partners. These results show that, on average across all cities, mayors include broad collaborative messages twice per speech. Additionally, when comparing annual speeches in non-mayoral control and mayoral control cities, differences again arise. Mayors with formal authority over education include general collaboration discussions around three times per year, compared to twice in cities with traditional school governance, a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$).

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**Table 5.** Mayoral Service Collaboration and Detailed Service Collaboration Discussions

| | Total SC (n=374) | Non-MC SC (n=340) | MC SC (n=34) | Total DSC (n=374) | Non-MC DSC (n=340) | MC DSC (n=34) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total Codes** | 808 | 709 | 99 | 390 | 336 | 54 |
| **Mean** | 2.16 | 2.09 | 2.91 * | 1.04 | 0.99 | 1.59 * |
| **Median** | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| **S.D.** | 2.09 | 2.06 | 2.29 | 1.34 | 1.30 | 1.56 |

SC: Service collaboration discussions. DSC: SC that include detail about collaborators.
* $p < 0.05$

Meanwhile, Table 5's final three columns show detailed service collaboration (DSC) passages. These mentions represent a subset of the general SC instances discussed in the previous paragraph. However, excerpts in the "detailed" subset highlight specific goals, mention programmatic features, or provide other descriptive information, whereas the broader SC universe includes both these and much more general language as shown above. For example, Mayor Cicilline (Providence, RI) includes the following DSC passage in his 2010 speech:

> Yesterday we were proud to announce Jobs Now! Providence, a new city program funded with $10 million federal stimulus dollars that will put hundreds of Providence residents to work in the coming months. This program matches unemployed or underemployed applicants with employers who will be reimbursed 100 percent for the wages of a new employee through September of this year. This program will allow businesses to staff up and begin building momentum again and get area residents back to work. Jobs Now! Providence is the exciting result of a partnership between the City and the Rhode Island Department of Human Services, and will be facilitated by the Providence Chamber of Commerce, Workforce Solutions of Providence, and the Providence Economic Development Partnership.

As this passage demonstrates, Mayor Cicilline gives not only information about collaborators, but also the locus and goals of this particular collaboration. On average, mayors discuss service collaboration in detailed ways once per speech, representing roughly half of all service collaboration messages.

These results also show that mayors with formal power over education policy include detailed collaboration messages in their speeches more frequently than mayors without mayoral control. Similar to governance comparisons in previous paragraphs, this finding is confirmed by statistical tests ($p<0.05$). Furthermore, when comparing detailed collaborations discussions (Table 5's final three columns) to all passages regardless of detail (Table 5's initial three columns), the difference between mayors in mayoral control cities and comparison mayors widens. Whereas mayors with formal education policy authority include collaborative messages approximately 40 percent more frequently overall, this figure increases to roughly 60 percent when focusing on detailed discussions. In total, these results suggest that mayors in mayoral control cities include general collaboration messages more frequently than other mayors. This difference not only continues, but also widens when concentrating on detailed service collaboration excerpts.

**Education collaboration agendas.** As this study is most interested in education service collaborations, Table 6 employs the same techniques as above and shows how frequently mayors discuss collaborations that include K-12 education actors as partners. The first three columns show how often mayors include education in general collaboration discussions, while the final three columns report how frequently it occurs within detailed service collaboration messages. In total, 286 general collaboration mentions include education (35.4 percent of all general collaboration passages) whereas 167 detailed collaboration discussions highlight education

actors (42.8 percent). These suggest that education becomes more relevant to partnership discussions as they include more detail.

**Table 6.** Service Collaboration and Detailed Service Collaboration Mentions Including Education

|  | Total SCe (n=374) | Non-MC SCe (n=340) | MC SCe (n=34) | Total DSCe (n=374) | Non-MC DSCe (n=340) | MC DSCe (n=34) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 286 | 250 | 36 | 167 | 142 | 25 |
| **Mean** | 0.76 | 0.74 | 1.06 | 0.45 | 0.42 | 0.74 + |
| **Median** | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| **S.D.** | 1.02 | 1.00 | 1.20 | 0.08 | 0.76 | 0.96 |

SCe: Mayoral service collaboration discussions including education. DSCe: SCe that include detail about collaborators.
$+ p < 0.1$

Although statistically insignificant, differences between governance types indicate that mayors with mayoral control discuss collaborations including education more frequently. Furthermore, as collaborative passages become more detailed, the difference in frequencies widens and statistical significance becomes more suggestive. For general collaboration passages, mayors with mayoral control include education 43 percent more often in their speeches, on average. This difference widens to 76 percent when considering detailed service collaboration discussions that include education actors. These percentages align and slightly exceed the previously discussed figures for collaboration agendas across all potential collaborators. Overall, mayors in mayoral control cities appear to have more pronounced collaboration and education collaboration agendas as compared to other mayors.

Another way to consider education's presence in collaboration agendas is to analyze its inclusion in partnership discussions compared to other frequently mentioned collaborators. Table 7 shows the top five collaborators across all speeches disaggregated by collaborative message

detail and governance type.[9] One important aspect to consider when coding State of the City addresses is the frequent use of idioms like "my office" by mayors. As an example, Long Beach, CA Mayor Foster said in 2010, "You know about the partnership between my office and the [school district] that formed the [outside-of-school vocational program]…" The code for this passage indicates detailed service collaboration discussion involving education (DSCe) and a general catchall code for "general government." Although likely that mayors delegate this initiative to some other office, onlookers cannot know for certain which department works on this program. Therefore, codes for other governmental agencies may be depressed relative to their actual collaborative work.

**Table 7.** Most Common Collaborative Actors by Governance

| | Service Collaboration (808 Total) | | Detailed Service Collaboration (390 total) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Non-MC | MC | Non-MC | MC |
| **Total Mentions** | 709 | 99 | 336 | 54 |
| **General Government** | 270 (38.1%) | 22 (22.2%) | 147 (43.8%) | 14 (25.9%) |
| **Education Agencies** | 248 (35.0%) | 34 (34.3%) | 142 (42.3%) | 25 (46.3%) |
| **Public Safety Provider** | 130 (18.3%) | 26 (26.2%) | 68 (20.2%) | 12 (22.2%) |
| **Community Org./Non-Profit** | 134 (18.9%) | 7 (7.1%) | 72 (21.4%) | 6 (11.1%) |
| **Businesses and Business Groups** | 91 (12.8%) | 21 (21.2%) | 53 (15.8%) | 16 (29.6%) |

Focusing first on general service collaboration discussions, Table 7's first two columns, mayors in non-mayoral control cities most frequently reference general government and education actors (38.1 and 35.0 percent, respectively). These two vastly outnumber other actors. On the other hand, although mayors with formal power in education policy include education

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[9] Although these are the top five overall collaborators, the set changes slightly when considering only mayoral control collaborative discussions. While four of the actors remain in the top five (general government, education agencies, public safety provider, and businesses or business groups), foundation/philanthropies replace community organizations/non-profits as the fifth most frequently mentioned actor. However, as it does not change analyses, Table 7 reports only the top five overall collaborators.

actors at roughly the same rate as other mayors, they mention all other actors at a noticeably lesser rate (second place, public safety providers, receive 8.1 percent fewer mentions than education). This may suggest that relative to all actors, mayors in mayoral control cities place a greater relative agenda importance on education collaborations. Table 7's right two columns show the similar figures when only considering detailed service collaboration passages. Overall, the same general pattern emerges—in non-mayoral control cities mayors include general government and education actors at rates far outweighing others (43.8 and 42.3 percent, respectively). However, within the mayoral control subgroup, education's relative importance becomes even more pronounced. When considering detailed collaborative messages, mayors in mayoral control cities highlight education collaborations at rates exceeding the second most frequently cited collaborator by 16.7 percent. These proportions suggest that mayors in both education governance arrangements include education to roughly the same degree. An important distinction, however, is that executives in mayoral control systems mention education far more frequently in a relative sense. While collaborations including education actors share top billing with general government actors in non-mayoral cities, they are firmly alone in the spotlight in mayoral control cities—especially as discussions include more detail.

**Summary: More Agenda Support Under Mayoral Control**

Analyses using State of the City speeches presents three important findings. First, speeches show that mayors in mayoral control cities include education, collaboration generally, and detailed collaboration discussions more frequently in their agendas than do other mayors. Second, findings suggest that mayors with education policy authority also include education collaborations more frequently than other mayors. Third, mayors in cities with traditional school governance systems describe collaborations including general government and education actors

with roughly the same frequency, far surpassing other collaborators. In mayoral control systems, however, education stands alone as the most cited partner, and this relative emphasis on education collaborations becomes more pronounced as mayors provide more details about collaborative efforts.

These findings are congruent with mayoral control theories outlined in Chapter 2. While difficult to directly tie policy action to rhetorical commitment, some studies show policy outcomes such as increased funding correspond with agendas conveyed in State of the City speeches (Hopkins & McCabe, 2012). Beyond direct outcomes, mayoral agendas can also mobilize interest and resources around the issues they encompass. Thus, more frequent education and school-service collaboration prioritization from mayors in their annual agenda speeches may indirectly benefit collaborative environments. In either case, this chapter's findings show that mayors in mayoral control cities promote political environments for education collaborations by advancing agendas that place greater emphasis on these topics.

**CHAPTER 4: Case Study City Backgrounds**

Although mayoral agendas include education and, to a lesser degree, school collaborations, many actors shape whether and to what degree these agendas are realized. To better understand the issues influencing collaborations, this study focuses on two places where mayors expressed relatively strong agenda commitment to both education and collaborations. Further, because theory asserts mayoral control may benefit school partnerships, and the results from the previous chapter show agenda support for these claims, case studies intentionally target cities with different school governance systems—traditionally governed Rochester, NY, and mayoral controlled Providence, RI.

**Rochester, New York**

Located in western New York, Rochester is the state's third largest city. Its history ties heavily to business and innovation, especially in imaging and optics, and was birthplace of Eastman Kodak, Xerox, and Bausch & Lomb. While population increased until the 1950s, subsequent suburbanization led to an exodus from the central city common across the United States. According to U.S. Census data, although the decline slowed, Rochester lost population every decade since 1950. Rochester's 2010 Census population was 210,565. For context, this represents a nearly 37 percent decline from its 1950 peak of 332,488. The city is also plurality black and nearly a third of its residents live below the poverty line (Table 2 in Chapter 2 also showed these figures).

Rochester City School District (RCSD) is often referred to as one of New York State's "Big Five" districts, along with New York City, Buffalo, Syracuse, and Yonkers. RCSD enrolls 30,489 students who, relative to the city's population, disproportionately come from minority and low-income backgrounds. For example, while 31.6 percent live below the poverty line in

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Rochester, roughly 90 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. The Big Five are unique not only as the five largest districts in New York, but also because they are all financially dependent on their cities and do not have separate bonding authority. In Rochester, subject to a Maintenance of Effort order, the city provides RCSD $191 million annually. This figure has been fixed since 2005—even as city tax revenues fluctuate, the city must legally provide the $191m. For context, this represents nearly 89 percent of all property taxes in the 2013-2014 Amended Budget, or roughly a quarter of Rochester's total city budget. This situation also means that even if Rochester's finances worsen, the city government is forced to give an increasing share of its budget to the independently governed RCSD.

Rochester students consistently rate poorly according to various academic measures. During the 2012-2013 school year, only six percent of RCSD third graders were proficient or higher on English language arts tests. The figure in math was also six percent. When considering eighth graders, the respective figures were six and four percent.[10] A Schott Foundation for Public Education report (2012) ranked Rochester's graduation rate for black males as worst in the nation. The Buffalo Business First newspaper annually ranks the performance of 429 districts in upstate New York. In the most recent fully available version (2013), RCSD ranks 429th (Bakeman, 2013). Although methodologically problematic,[11] this report receives heavy publicity in western and central New York and further solidifies a poor district image.

**District Administration in Rochester.** Rochester has a seven-person traditionally elected board that appoints the superintendent. Five currently seated board members were elected between 2003 and 2007, with elections every other year for four-year terms. RCSD had three

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[10] Updated New York State report cards can be found at:
http://data.nysed.gov/reportcard.php?year=2013&instid=800000050065
[11] Among other substantive problems, the report only considers academic performance without controlling for other factors such as student demographics.

permanent superintendents since 2003. Well-liked Manuel Rivera, hired in 2003, focused on

eliminating middle schools and switching the district to elementary and high schools only,

aligning district practices to comply with accountability standards, and creating a Rochester

Children's Zone initiative modeled after New York City's Harlem Children's Zone (discussed

further in a future section) (Macaluso, 2005; Meyer, 2007). Although he was widely well

regarded personally and considered managerially adept, he left in 2007 to become New York

State Deputy Secretary of Education, before the Children's Zone planning phase finished.

After Rivera's departure, RCSD hired Broad Superintendents Academy alum Jean-

Claude Brizard in 2008. He remained in office until 2011 and became divisive by favoring

reforms popular across the nation: charter schools, tying teacher evaluation to student

performance, and closing underperforming schools (Larimer, 2010; Macaluso, 2011). Acrimony

surrounding these reforms led to protests at public speaking engagements and a Rochester

Teachers Association (RTA) vote of no confidence where 94.6 percent of union members

expressed disapproval of Brizard (Bortnick, 2011; "Teachers Take Vote," 2011). Brizard

departed Rochester two months after the no-confidence vote to head Chicago Public Schools.

Following his departure, a member of the Rochester Community Education Taskforce said, "We

wouldn't wish him on anyone. We're glad to see him go" (Rossi & Janssen, n.d.). In the same

vein, the head of the RTA highlighted the tension preceding the Superintendent's departure:

"Brizard's definition of shared decision making was to make a decision and the share it with

others" (Rossi & Janssen, n.d.).

The school board then hired current superintendent Bolgen Vargas in 2011 on an interim

and then permanent basis to replace Brizard. Vargas served on RCSD's board in the late 1990s

and early 2000s, including a stint as Board President. Thus far, Vargas' agenda seeks to increase

attendance and reduce behavior issues, enhance parent outreach, extend school days and years, modernize facilities, close/realign underperforming schools, and partner with Universities to run schools (Adams, 2013; Macaluso, 2012; Macaluso, 2013; Macaluso, 2014). While Vargas appears to be well liked personally, some of his reforms have led to conflict. In January 2014, over 90 percent of the local administrators union voted no confidence in Vargas, the first such vote in their history. Some reports suggest this stems from Vargas' unwillingness to grant administrator tenure as he works to restructure the district (Murphy, 2014).

In total, none of these superintendents had much time to stabilize reform agendas. While Rivera attempted to rely on his managerial and interpersonal advantages, Brizard came in with a drastically different style and platform. Vargas has been a permanent hire for approximately two years and continues attempts to close or retool underperforming schools. However, he differs from his predecessor by making some of the underlying issues influencing school performance, like attendance or summer learning loss, more prominent in his mission.

**Mayors in Rochester.** William A. (Bill) Johnson became Rochester's first black mayor in 1994 and stepped down at the end of 2005 after his third term. A political outsider, Johnson spent 20 years as President of the Rochester Urban League, a community-organizing group that runs education and youth programs. Candidate Johnson initially ran heavily on an education platform and demanded fiscal responsibility from the school district. Mayor Johnson openly feuded with the school board, and in 1997 introduced state legislation that aimed but ultimately failed to remove administrative hiring oversight from school board purview (Bowers & Baker, 2000). Reflecting on his difficulties working with a separately elected school board, Mayor Johnson wrote during his 1997 reelection bid:

When I became mayor, I thought those charged with carrying out education

policy would be compelled to listen, and then act, but they have not. I now realize

that the school system is incapable of hearing any single voice…This system

operates like a cartel. If you are not part of this narrowly focused group, you have

no voice. (Johnson, 1997, as cited in Bowers & Baker, 2000, p. 98).

In 1999, during his second term, Mayor Johnson broke with his past reticence to become

politically involved in school board elections and worked actively to defeat incumbents, securing

a more favorable school board majority (Bowers & Baker, 2000).

After Bill Johnson, Rochester elected former Policy Chief Robert (Bob) Duffy, who

served from 2006 until he became Lieutenant Governor in 2011. During his time as mayor,

Duffy conflicted with the school board and proposed mayoral control in 2010, which fueled

conflicts around education policy already surrounding Superintendent Brizard (Ramos, 2010).

Ultimately, mayoral control efforts stalled in the New York State Legislature as Duffy ran for

state office. Additionally, Duffy's deputy mayor applied for the Broad Superintendents Academy

(Sutter, 2010), potentially in preparation of a successful mayoral control bid. These mayoral

control efforts highlight how Duffy continued poor relations between the mayor's office and

elected board members and worked to threaten their policy authority.

Following Mayor Duffy's mayoral control attempts, Thomas Richards won a special

election in March 2011 against former Mayor Johnson. Those interviewed for this project said

Richards "had very little to do with the schools." Another remarked how Richards abandoned

Duffy's education interests for "totally political" reasons, implying that Richards did not want to

jeopardize support for his reelection bid in 2013, just two years after he won special election.

In January 2014, Lovely Warren officially took over as mayor after beating Mayor Richards in 2013 primary and general elections. Throughout her campaign, Warren incorporated education policy in her platform, heavily promoting school choice and early childhood education. While still early in her tenure, Mayor Warren has already convened an Early Learning Council to assess Rochester's Pre-K system and develop recommendations for future efforts. As of this writing, the Early Learning Council had not released its report. Mayoral control, a remnant of the Duffy era, remains an issue in Rochester and New York—State Assemblyman David Gantt reintroduced mayoral control legislation in each of the past two years. Although Mayor Warren has said she will not push for Mayoral Control, she also said she will accept whatever the legislature decides (Fien, 2014).

The situation in Rochester, then, is one of interest in and conflict around education. For 20 years, mayors publicly asserted their interest in reforming RCSD operations, often being met with resistance. These divisive issues remain in the background as the city moves forward.

**Collaboration in Rochester.** In Rochester, smaller-scale initiatives through individual schools or programs exist to incorporate social services. Five schools have school-based health centers funded by New York State, administered through local hospitals, and with oversight from the state Department of Health. However, informants in Rochester did not mention these a single time and other information about them proved scant. This suggests that these are somewhat autonomous programs to each school and not broader initiatives within the city.

Other collaborations utilize what appears to be a contracting approach. For example, the Hillside Work Scholarship Connection provides youth mentoring and academic support while linking students with part time employment. For preschool to third grade children, The Children's Institute runs a program called Primary Project, which provides behavioral

monitoring, social and emotional intervention via paraprofessionals, and opportunities for teacher training. Another program for seventh graders, run by the Urban League, delivers cultural enrichment as well as academic, social, and emotional supports so students can better acclimate to high school transitions. These programs may range from a single school to several (e.g. all secondary schools), but remain programmatic and narrow in focus rather than indicating shared and broad collaborative environments.

This is not a negative critique of those initiatives mentioned above. Each provides value to the district, to individual schools, and most importantly, to students. However, rather than broader systems change through long-term shared commitment, joint planning, or conjoined operations, they represent more narrowly focused or individualized efforts supported by contracting or legal requirements. One reason for programmatic rather than broader systemic efforts to foster collaboration, as uncovered through this study, may have to do with the aforementioned Rochester Children's Zone.

Although then-Superintendent Rivera heavily supported the Rochester Children's Zone (RCZ), modeled initially after the Harlem Children's Zone, he left before planning processes ended. Perhaps due to leadership flux within the district, RCZ broadened its focus and sought to engage the community around health, parent and youth support, safety, housing, education, and community development (Jimenez, 2008). This broader focus than Harlem Children Zone's more education-centric approach contributed to the eventual rebranding as Rochester Surround Care Community (to be consistent with interviews, this piece only uses RCZ nomenclature) (Philipp, 2008).

RCZ suffered many missteps that led to its demise. Filling the void caused by Rivera's departure, interim leadership led by a city councilperson appointed Iris Banister as director. This

choice alienated the community on two fronts. First, Banister was not an educator. Second, rather than immerse herself in the community as Geoffrey Canada had done in Harlem, she used a relatively high salary ($125,000) to move to the suburbs. Compounding these missteps, New York State cut funding early in RCZ's life, making resources a serious constraint for such a broadly focused program (Chicago Policy Research Team, 2009). Eventually, Banister resigned in 2009 and the board dissolved.

Those interviewed indicate that RCZ's failure lingers. Community members believe the program was too ambitious. One remarked, "We started too big, too fast, too soon." Another echoed, "It perhaps buckled under its own weight. It was so ambitious, the hurdles were so significant, the players were so many." A third different Rochesterian tied the failure back to the change in leadership post-Superintendent Rivera:

> It shifted; a city council elected official became the president of the Rochester
> Children Zone and they shifted from creating the systems change—because the
> intention was to create a system's change with the health department, with the
> city, with the county, with the City School District, with the colleges and
> university… They incorporated and then became a service delivery. We didn't
> want to be about service delivery. We really wanted to be about systems change
> and how do you keep bringing all these different partners together to come up
> with a plan… It became a political thing, wanting to take control, take it away.

Finally, a fourth stakeholder described hesitance about engaging in school-service collaborations due to RCZ experiences: "We want to be supportive but we're also nervous because the Rochester Children's Zone was a ghastly failure." The frequency with which participants

highlighted RCZ's failure suggests that it still weighs heavily on their commitment to school-service partnerships.

**Rochester's Relevance to the Current Study.** Rochester suffers from problems common to many cities and urban school districts: declining population, district financial constraints, and low academic achievement. Further, Rochester's superintendent turnover is not uncommon relative to other urban districts (Hess, 1999). Although mayors have fueled some conflict, they show interest in education even though they have no formal authority over it. Furthermore, as Chapter 3 investigates using State of the City addresses, Rochester was one of six cities where mayors most often advance education and education service collaboration agendas. This interest in service collaborations in Rochester is also apparent due to various programs linking schools and service providers, though many of these collaborations are narrowly focused rather than broad citywide systems to promote partnership. Although one ambitious attempt to redesign the systems serving low-income communities eventually failed, these efforts signal potential within Rochester for such initiatives. All these factors, combined with Rochester's traditional school governance system, make it a useful case to study whether mayors foster school-service collaborations and if they do so in ways reliant on formal authority.

**Providence, Rhode Island**

Located roughly 50 miles southwest of Boston and 75 miles due east of Hartford, CT, Providence is Rhode Island's capital and most populous city. The city is probably most known for its concentration of universities, as it is home to Brown University, Providence College, and the Rhode Island School of Design. Similar to Rochester, Providence saw its population decline dramatically beginning in the mid 20th century. From its peak of 253,504 residents in 1940, Providence lost over 96,000 residents before hitting its low of 156,804 in 1980. However, the

city now has 178,042 residents. While this figure reflects three straight decades of slight population growth, it still represents a 30 percent decline from 1940. Although Providence is plurality minority, like Rochester, it is heavily Hispanic/Latino rather than black. Similarly, while Providence's poverty rate is marginally lower than Rochester's, 28 percent of residents fall below this threshold (Table 2 in Chapter 2 also provided this information).

Providence Public School District (PPSD) enrolls 23,241 students. These students disproportionately come from minority and low-income households as compared to the overall city population. Students, as in Rochester, overwhelmingly qualify for free and reduced price lunch and more than 90 percent are non-white. PPSD is fiscally dependent, with roughly one-third of its budget coming from the City. Each year, PPSD superintendents propose budgets for school board approval and transmittal to the Mayor for incorporation into the city's budget proposal. Mayors may also veto school budgets, and the City Council has final budget approval. In the most recent publicly available data on approved budgets (2013-2014), the City allocated $124.9m to PPSD, just below 20 percent of the total city budget and the same amount allocated the prior year.

Providence students underperform relative to others in the state. Data from the Rhode Island Department of Education Infoworks![12] data reporting tool show that 33 percent of PPSD third grade students meet standards in math, while 47 percent meet standards in reading. In eighth grade, the figures are 34 percent for math and 48 percent for reading. These marks fall anywhere from 32 to 41 percent below state averages. For ninth graders entering PPSD in the 2008-2009 school year, 65.5 percent graduated within four years and 70.6 percent within five. These figures are roughly 12 and 10 percent behind state averages, respectively.

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[12] Find the reporting tool at: http://infoworks.ride.ri.gov/district/providence.

**District Administration in Providence.** Since 1980, Providence's mayor controls education policy. The 1980 Home Rule Charter provides mayors with appointment power for the nine-member board, which hires the superintendent. Each year, three staggered seats require appointment for a three-year term. Since 1993, when then-mayor Vincent ("Buddy") Cianci heeded a local non-profit organization's recommendation to create a School Board Nominating Commission, mayors make their appointments from the Commission's list of possible candidates. Originally, individuals appointed by five local non-profits comprised the Commission (Wong et al., 2007). However, in 2003, the decennial Charter Review Commission recommended the Nominating Commission be filled via mayoral appointment. Since then, mayors appoint the Commission, which in turn furnishes the mayor with a list of candidates.

Under this system, four superintendents have served Providence since 2002. In 2002, Melody Johnson followed a superintendent who left the district on bad terms with the Providence Teachers Union (PTU). After her promotion, Johnson worked to mend those relationships, primarily focusing her efforts on instructional mapping and other reforms to minimize instructional differences among classrooms. Although personal relationships stayed healthy, the PTU bristled at "stifling" curricular reforms (Davis, 2004). Following Johnson's departure for Fort Worth, TX, in 2005, the Board hired Donnie Evans from Tampa, FL. His agenda focused heavily on administrative reorganization and "Whole School Effectiveness" reforms, which emphasized principal leadership, promoted high expectations and measured goals, and tried to foster community engagement. After mishandling a snow emergency in December 2007, strained relations between Evans, the community, and the City Council contributed to his resignation at the end of his initial contract in 2008 (Molinaro, 2006; Donnis, 2008a; Donnis, 2008b).

Tom Brady came to Providence from Philadelphia in 2008. As a former Army colonel and district leader, Brady developed the reputation for astute financial and organizational management and is likely best remembered for three things. First, contradicting the district's collective bargaining agreement, he supported initiatives to allow teacher hiring without regard for seniority (Sawchuk, 2009). Second, together with PTU leadership, Brady negotiated United Providence!—an ongoing and jointly run PPSD and PTU education management organization operating three schools (Silva & Headden, 2011). Third, Brady presided over the 2011 firing of all PPSD teachers when a budget deficit confronted the city (Goodnough, 2011). While the district rehired 75 percent of those terminated shortly thereafter, with an additional 15 to 20 percent invited to reapply, this event soured relations among teachers and newly inaugurated Mayor Angel Taveras.

Susan Lusi became interim superintendent in 2011 following Brady's departure and was permanently hired in 2012. Thus far, Lusi's initiatives stress outcomes like reading on grade level as well as graduation and attendance rates. Further, recent strategic planning emphasizes teacher and administrator development, including work to refine new statewide teacher evaluation systems (Zappa, 2013). While she favors coherent accountability systems, Lusi has recently come out against the state-used NECAP tests, saying they distract from Common Core implementation and are unfair to students from low-income backgrounds when used as a graduation requirement (Borg, 2014a; Borg, 2014b).

Unlike Rochester, media coverage about education issues in Providence is less suggestive of frequent conflict. However, turnover continues to plague the district. Continuous administrator churn makes stable reform agendas difficult. However, none of the agendas appear to wildly vary. This may stem from three of the four superintendents discussed being Broad

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Superintendents Academy alums (all but Donnie Evans). The shared preparation program may signal a similar leadership outlook and provide one reason for congruence. Another explanation may be that Providence's mayoral control governance promotes stability because mayors matter more for policy direction than superintendents.

**Mayors in Providence.** Providence's history over the last forty years tied deeply to former mayor Buddy Cianci. First elected in 1975, Cianci was forced to resign in 1984 after assaulting a man thought to be having an affair with his wife. Cianci successfully ran again in 1990, serving until a conviction for racketeering in 2002, for which he spent five years in federal prison. As mayor, Cianci seemed to exclusively build his reputation on economic development and downtown revitalization (Rich, 2000). Few accounts detailed any involvement in education policy, some only acknowledging his role in creating the School Board Nominating Commission (Wong et al., 2007). Indeed, Cianci's eventual successor, David Cicilline, ran on a platform claiming underlying issues like schools remained woefully neglected as the city pursued economic development (McGovern, 2005). Now out of prison and back in Providence, Cianci is currently running for mayor again.

In 2003, David Cicilline became mayor and entered the turmoil resulting from Cianci. While his primary focus was to restore confidence in government, and he continued to heavily promote economic development, Cicilline also made good on campaign promises regarding schools. More specifically, Cicilline's most prominent initiative targeted extended learning and after school programs. Together with a statewide advocacy organization, Cicilline helped secure Wallace Foundation funding to form the Providence After School Alliance (PASA), an organization that endures today and whose Executive Director informs this study. PASA works with the district and various community organizations to provide after school and summer

programming as well as youth development opportunities (Goldsmith, 2008). Additionally, at a handful of Providence schools as Cicilline's tenure ended, the mayor supported full service community school (FSCS) models to help promote service coordination. Finally, in his last year, Cicilline formed the Providence Mayor's Children and Youth Cabinet (CYC), whose director participated in this study. The Cabinet convenes the school district and local service providers to foster collaboration and strategically plan programs to help Providence youth. While PASA and Providence's FSCS are discussed with some detail below, the CYC becomes a central player in the narrative that unfolds through the remainder of this study. Cicilline left office after winning his bid for the U.S. House of Representatives in 2010.

Current mayor Angel Taveras grew up in Providence, attended PPSD, and is the first Latino mayor in the city's history. While his mayoralty started with a budget deficit and the teacher firings mentioned above, he also promoted early childhood education, with emphasis on helping children meet third grade reading targets. As part of this push, Taveras won the 2013 Bloomberg Philanthropies Mayor's Challenge, a $5 million competitive grant program that solicited over 300 applications. His Providence Talks program targets children aged birth to three, providing parental training to close the word gap (Steinhauer, 2013). The program is still in early stages, with its pilot commencing in spring 2014. Taveras also maintained involvement with the CYC, though the relationship became less focused on mayoral involvement (as discussed in Chapter 6). Currently, Taveras continues to prioritize early childhood education as he runs for Rhode Island Governor (Savitch-Lew, 2013).

The post-Cianci era in Providence has been marked by increased mayoral attention to education. Both Cicilline and Taveras staked their claim to a clearly defined issue, extended or summer learning time and early childhood education, respectively. In pursuit of their agendas,

each engaged the community more broadly to work on these collaborations. Overall, although turmoil accompanying the teacher-firing incident and rapid superintendent turnover confronts PPSD, Providence's education policy environment appears less conflict-ridden than Rochester's.

**Collaboration in Providence.** Just as in Rochester, Providence has its fair share of programmatic collaboration. The Providence Full Service Community School (PFSCS) initiative serves as one example. Funded by a U.S. Department of Education grant, PFSCS operates through Dorcas International, a local nonprofit. As the lead agency, Dorcas partners with other local organizations to staff each of five schools with site coordinators. Coordinators help manage service providers offering year-round out of school programming, family and adult literacy, physical fitness and nutrition services, as well as other forms of family engagement and academic development. The full services model began operating in the five PFSCS schools in 2009 and 2010, and although the federal grant supporting the program expired in 2013, partner organizations have sustained PFSCS initiatives. Even though coordinated planning occurred, each site involved different partners. Based on interviews for this project, efforts primarily focused on individual schools rather than broader collaborative environments.

The Providence After School Alliance, founded with Mayor Cicilline's help, focuses on after school programming in middle and high schools. PASA acts as an intermediary organization in support of Providence's after school system. Therefore, some of PASA's function is inherently collaborative as it works to build capacities of partner organizations and the school district, both through its strategic planning and advocacy, expertise, and small-level grant making. Over time, relationships evolved to promote more PASA programming within the district. Although focused narrowly on after school and summer learning opportunities, PASA

operates in ways that change the environment for collaboration around these issues by promoting systemic capacities rather than only building individual after school programs.

Finally, Mayor Cicilline helped start the Children and Youth Cabinet, which Mayor Taveras has sustained. The CYC convenes a very broad collection of non-profit, governmental, and school actors to promote collaborations across the city. In this way, it is focused on facilitating programs among its members to benefit children at all stages of their childhood. Unlike those above, the CYC is not a service provider or concerned with one issue like after school programs. Rather, it is focused on aligning goals among groups, developing stable institutional relationships so that problems can be addressed collaboratively, and breaking down divisions so that school and social problems can be addressed more comprehensively. By doing these things, the CYC hopes to create a sustainable partnership environment—one where collaborations are less ad hoc, not as dependent on individual players, and have a support network to draw from as they develop and operate.

**Providence's Relevance to the Current Study.** Providence and Rochester share many features. Both are similarly mid-sized northeastern cities with a majority non-white population. Like Rochester, Providence has long-term population loss, relatively low academic achievement, and superintendent turnover. Its most recent mayors have taken a more active interest in schools, breaking with precedent set by Mayor Cianci. In its State of the City addresses analyzed in Chapter 3, Providence was one of six cities most often discussing education and education service collaborations (along with Rochester). Efforts like PFSCS, PASA, and the CYC further show commitment to school collaborations. Finally, unlike Rochester, Providence has mayoral control of its schools. Thus, Providence presents an ideal contrast to Rochester to investigate whether and to what degree governance differences influence school-service collaborations.

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**Summary: Ideal Contrasting Cases**

For all their similarities in demographics, low student achievement, superintendent turnover, mayoral interest in education and school collaborations, and existing partnerships, Rochester and Providence present ideally contrasting cases based on one key difference: Providence has mayoral control whereas Rochester has a traditional school governance structure. Background research suggests a more conflicted education policy environment in Rochester and broader initiatives to foster collaboration in Providence. Thus, it may be that different issues shape collaborations in Providence and that mayors use their formal authority to develop partnerships, as suggested by mayoral control theories. To investigate these possibilities, Chapter 5 examines the factors confronting school-service collaborations to see whether different issues arise in the two cities. If mayoral control is effective, one would expect differences in those issues most salient to collaborators because mayors help overcome otherwise persistent barriers. Chapter 6 then investigates common methods employed in each city to promote citywide school-service collaboration and discusses potential limits to mayoral control theories.

**CHAPTER 5: The Similar Factors Confronting Collaboration in Rochester and Providence**

Given theories about mayoral control's positive influence on collaboration, one may expect different issues to most influence partnerships in cities with contrasting school governance. That is, if mayoral control leads to its theoretical collaborative benefits, it should help overcome some of the roadblocks common to collaboration. As a result, when participants describe sets of factors hindering school-service collaborations, they should not align completely because mayoral control should overcome some of them. If this is the case, one would expect barriers to school-service partnership in Providence to be at least slightly different than those in Rochester.

Thus, two possibilities emerge when comparing collaborative barriers in non-mayoral control cities like Rochester and mayoral control cities like Providence. First, differences exist among factors influencing school collaborations in both cities. In this case, those collaborative issues identified in Rochester, but not in Providence, may be factors addressed by mayoral control. This scenario may suggest that formal education policy authority successfully ameliorates some of the key problems facing school collaborations and removes those concerns from participant discussions. Put another way, Rochester's problems are not raised as collaborative barriers in Providence because mayors use their formal education power to successfully deal with them.

Second, the same collaborative problems may confront each city and suggest limits to mayoral authority. If participants in both cities identify similar troubles, mayoral authority may not play as crucial a role in facilitating collaboration as theory implies. If this second scenario develops, three possible explanations exist. First, it may be that the biggest roadblocks are not those addressed by mayoral control and theories misidentify collaborative problems. Second, even though mayoral authority can help overcome the most common partnership barriers,

mayors do not use the powers granted by mayoral control. Finally, if mayoral control can address collaborative problems and mayors attempt to wield their powers, authority may be ineffective in practice and insufficient to clear hurdles to school-service collaboration.

This chapter reports the most commonly identified factors shaping collaborations with schools in both Providence and Rochester. When discussing their respective cities, participants identify six issues that commonly confront school-service partnerships. Furthermore, the same six collaborative issues arise in each city and each is identified far more frequently than other factors. Four of these concerns relate to collaboration management: school bureaucracy, relationships, resources, and goal alignment. The other two are stability issues: agenda presence and turnover. Reflecting on these concerns, this chapter discusses how mayoral control theoretically overcomes each of these conditions to foster school-service collaborations. Based on these factors' similarly consistent saliency in each city, however, these findings begin to suggest that theories about mayoral control's collaborative benefits may be misguided. Instead, either mayors may be ineffective in practice or the true barriers to collaboration may fall beyond mayoral purview.

Unlike other topics, at least half of all conversations in each city highlight six common factors when discussing school-service collaborations. Furthermore, the least prevalent issue still arises among 13 different informants (seven in Rochester and six in Providence); nearly double the rate of the next most frequent issue (organizational culture, identified by four in Rochester and three in Providence). Therefore, these issues differ from others not only due to their frequency but also their broad reach across participants. Table 8 lists the number of participants identifying each factor confronting school-service collaborations in each city.

**Table 8.** Number of Participants Discussing Each Collaborative Issue

| Issue | Rochester (n = 12) | Providence (n = 10) |
|---|---|---|
| Management Issues | | |
| School Bureaucracy | 7 (58%) | 6 (60%) |
| Relationships | 10 (83%) | 9 (90%) |
| Resources | 10 (83%) | 10 (100%) |
| Goal Alignment | 8 (67%) | 8 (80%) |
| Stability Issues | | |
| Agenda Presence | 8 (67%) | 7 (70%) |
| Turnover | 8 (67%) | 9 (90%) |

## Management Issues

As they discuss issues influencing collaborations with schools, informants in both cities frequently cite management issues. These concerns include the size of school bureaucracies, relationships among collaborators, resources for collaborations, and goal alignment within partnerships.

**School bureaucracy.** Those interviewed typically viewed bureaucratic issues as an impediment to collaboration. Frequently, respondents characterized the school district as a "behemoth" due to its size, the various regulations influencing its operation, and the work required to navigate its vastness. So large, in fact, that when discussing how a partnership might require action from different "silos" within school organizations, one Rochester participant[13] explained the district presented a major impediment: "One hand doesn't know what the other hand is doing."

These issues led some providers to seek out alternative ways to interact with youth and education. Asked how she dealt with school bureaucracies when working on education issues, a

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[13] Indicating the sensitive nature of many of the following topics, many interviewees intermittently requested that certain quotes remain unattributed. To protect identities as much as possible, this piece anonymizes all quotes except for when position adds to the narrative without compromising requested confidentiality. Similarly, all participants will be referred to as female regardless of true gender. Cities are sometimes omitted because such information, paired with quotes, could easily suggest identity.

Rochester informant replied, "The honest response is we worked in early childhood because we didn't have to deal with schools." Thinking about how mayors interact with schools, another Providence stakeholder revealed how politicians may hesitate to engage schools collaboratively due to district bureaucracy. Specifically about why an afterschool agenda developed, she said:

> Being an education mayor, you don't want to hang your hat on that alone. Any campaign manager tells you, don't make education your big selling point… because I can probably get faster results from the afterschool community than I can from a school reform agenda.

Especially in the context of showing results, those interviewed often identified school bureaucracies as something where a work-around was preferable to direct interaction.

**Relationships.** Both interpersonal and institutional relationships mediate abilities to collaborate around education issues. In these two cities, the ways in which individuals or organizations compete among each other plays a key role. One Rochester participant spoke about inherent self-promotion: "Sometimes territory and ego can be an inhibitor or barrier to collaboration: 'Our products are better than anyone else's.' You hear it all the time. 'They've got a good mission, but we deliver better service and better product.'" Such attitudes are somewhat inherent to services, this interviewee continued. Not only are those in service agencies often eager and enthusiastic about their mission, but they also often truly believe in the outstanding quality of their work. While these are assets to an organization's individual work, such competition can hinder school-service collaborations.

Others explained how it becomes hard to cede control when organizations become comfortable in their past efforts. Said one Providence interviewee:

If you run stuff and you've had a successful run at getting grants, or getting

money, or getting attention, or getting whatever, and now we're asking you to

come and share your information, and share your ways of working, and share

your learning, and share your time to the table… That's a little bit of a threat.

Another Rochester participant described a discussion where she tried to convince others to

behave in new ways and in conjunction with other groups. She said it was difficult because

"everybody has got their own comfort zones" from which they do not want to leave. While these

stakeholders appreciated the difficulty in breaking out of comfortable prior roles, they also

expressed frustration at how such factors made collaborations more difficult when trying to

connect with schools.

Just as they can impede, relationships can help people overcome competition. When

highlighting various people and organizations she felt comfortable with, one Providence service

provider explained how she operated differently. "When I'm at this table," she continued, "I'm

thinking about how I can contribute to it through my organization but I'm not thinking about

how my organization can rise to the top of the pile. That's important. That stuff matters." The

ties between this service provider and others helped her engage more quickly in collaborative

work within schools.

Further, individuals can operate in ways to make organizations more collaborative than

they otherwise would be. Speaking about an initiative with a seemingly difficult partner, a

Providence informant focused on one of the other organization's employees: "It's just clear

working with him, versus working with the executive director there who's so focused on internal

issues." Her implication was that this one man broke down divisions between collaborators.

While the organization's executive director focused solely on her organization, he actively built

relationships that kept other actors interested in collaborating on education initiatives even though they otherwise viewed the organization skeptically.

Overall, participants frequently discussed how relationships influenced their work. Many attached collaborative success or failure to the degree initiatives overcame competition among groups. When successfully working collectively and without worrying about individual or organizational success, informants positively described efforts. However, more frequently, they outlined how work to overcome competitive urges was long and often only mildly successful.

**Resources.** In areas where budgets are tight and understaffing common, resources can greatly benefit collaborations. Financially, the founding director of an organization working to build collaborations with different actors bluntly stated: "The only reason we got in was because the mayor and [a foundation] dropped a lot of cash." Further, while reflecting on the types of competition described above and a question about what can help overcome such strains, a Rochester interviewee shrugged and chuckled, "If money's on the table, we say, 'oh yeah we're glad to have these organizations.'"

Beyond finances, staffing was the other resource identified as a collaborative boon. Remembering efforts to form a council to foster collaboration, a Rochester participant learned that "there wasn't enough there to keep [it] going until we had some staff…" Eventually this effort was scaled back momentarily to develop staff capacity. Similarly, a Providence onlooker described a different initiative's difficulties prior to hiring professional staff: "By hiring a full time director, it completely transformed." With staffing capacity, the organization was able to pursue school collaborations more aggressively. Finally, two different informants summed up efforts to engage actors across the city. One Rochesterian explained, "if you take community engagement on education seriously, then you need a person in the office who can do that as

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well." Another in Providence concluded her discussion by saying, "if you don't staff it, it doesn't get done."

Although the inverse scenarios to each of the above can hinder collaboration (i.e. losing funding or staff can harm efforts), the ways groups mobilized and expended resources negatively impacted partnerships. One long-time social service funder in Providence remembers attending the first meeting among hopeful collaborators: "I'm sitting there, I'm thinking, 'Well, let me see. That person hates that person. That one will kill the other one for a grant.'" Her implication was that although funding could help, it might also serve to erode relationships because organizations will aggressively compete for limited funds. When considering how staffing issues harmed collaboration, a Providence participant remarked with disappointment that one collaborator provided "the least amount of staff support, and I think that's one of the things that I always wish—that maybe someone from their communication office could be engaged." In this context, one organization had a well-developed capacity for external communications but was not sharing that expertise with its partners. Such actions negatively influenced how other organizations viewed the withholding group and hindered collaborative relationships.

In Rochester, multiple respondents commented about the legally mandated Maintenance of Effort that requires the City provide RCSD with $119 million each year. This requirement negatively influenced relationships with the district, which takes a large portion of city revenues but has no municipal accountability. As one informant explained, "I believe that's certainly strained the relationship. That doesn't mean I think the $119 million is right or wrong. It is what it is. I think it has changed the relationship—strained the relationship." Although many mentioned that the Maintenance of Effort plays a role, multiple interviewees waited until interviews concluded and the voice recorder was off before raising the issue. This indicated a

sensitive issue and further suggested a wedge between city-school relationships due to school financing.

**Goal alignment.** Participants frequently said that only forming collaborative relationships was insufficient. When asked about issues helping collaboration, one Rochester interviewee first explained, "I think what helps is the ability to articulate and truly share a vision." Another in Providence more explicitly described how important aligned goals were: "that's just the bedrock of a successful collaboration because unless every single person at the table has the same end game, you're way off track, right?" She continued, "That's the upfront work and it's hugely hard. And people want to get to action and activity; they want to get to doing things, and until you can create that unified approach, you don't have a unified approach." Participants frequently acknowledged how such difficulty can be endemic to school collaborations due to the many pressures on schools and the limited time available to deal with them. "The reality is," one Rochester participant concluded, "few schools and agencies have that kind of luxury. That's where it breaks down." However, most of those interviewed agreed that actors must share goals to fully construct meaningful school-service partnerships.

Other participants highlighted how goal alignment issues can negatively interact with other relationship and resource factors. One Rochester participant told how funding can cover up planning deficiencies. Strategic planning is necessary, she described, so "that the partner is not the trailer that you're dragging around behind you because you got a grant together." She said such instances were fairly common and collaborations occurred thanks to financial resources, but faltered due to misaligned goals after resources ran out. Someone whose job was to bring together various actors also explained how "part of the barrier is that my job was nebulous…there were multiple competing interests about how to spend my time and what the job

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should be focused on." In this case, poor goal alignment allowed competitiveness among groups to affect staff functions. Thus, misaligned goals leave space for competitiveness to take over, undermining a staffing allotment that should benefit efforts to partner with schools.

Participants in both Rochester and Providence coalesce around these four management areas when detailing issues commonly faces when building school-service partnerships. Moreover, informants in each city not only identify these barriers with similar frequencies, but also often discuss them with similar language. This section's findings may indicate that these issues are not addressed by giving mayors formal education authority. However, the section below describes how mayoral control theories suggest governance shift should overcome these precise management concerns.

**Mayoral Control's Theorized Benefit to Management Issues**

Mayoral control seeks to erode bureaucratic divisions confronting collaborators when working with schools. Formal mayoral authority can remove a structural barrier between schools and other services, thus providing mayors with opportunity to integrate education with other services. Furthermore, as policy generalists, mayors often have managerial advantages compared to more narrowly focused managers (Meier, 2004). Among these advantages, mayors are thought to be less prone to micromanagement. Therefore, broadly focused management may be less likely to focus on one organization's issues and be more receptive to collaborations with other service providers.

Managerial advantages may also help mayors overcome relationship, resource, and goal alignment issues. Mayors occupy a unique position within cities to overcome the barriers presented by relationship issues. In the most pronounced instances where mayors control all actors involved (i.e. a city departments' collaborations with schools), they can use formal

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authority to overcome relationship issues and force actors to work together (Henig, 2009a).

Beyond times when formal authority may break down relationship barriers, mayors benefit from their roles outside education. The mayoralty's generalist nature means that mayors frequently manage competing interests and coordinate many different organizations in all other policy areas. These experiences likely better prepare mayors to make connections between schools and other services than superintendents and school boards.

Within a city, mayoral management may also help garner more financial and staffing capacity because one of the mayor's most pronounced competitive advantages is her ability to mobilize resources. Mayoral control theory highlights this in its claims that broader constituencies involved in education policy benefit schools. As involvement expands, mayors can mobilize financial or capacity resources to assist collaborations in ways superintendents cannot due to their more limited influence. Further, mayors will likely more effectively advocate across governmental levels for resources (Meier, 2004). Outside of government, funders may gain confidence and increase their support to mayoral control cities because they know buy-in exists among top-level leadership. Indeed, Reckhow (2013) finds this to be the case when assessing philanthropic grantmaking. Her findings suggest that, better than city demographics, mayoral or state control predicts foundation funding because governance structures offer opportunity to develop clear ties to leadership while also maximizing policy influence. Beyond mobilization, mayoral control eliminates divisions that can impede reforms. As seen in Rochester, negativity surrounding RCSD's Maintenance of Effort arrangement would likely be lessened if not removed should municipal government control how city dollars are spent. In all these ways, mayoral management can benefit schools as they seek collaborative arrangements by better mobilizing resources and eliminating barriers presented by current resource issues.

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Much as managerial abilities benefit relationships, so too can they benefit goal alignment efforts. Schools are naturally subject to many competing demands and therefore have various goals. While accountability demands may promote one set of goals, parental needs may direct schools elsewhere. Through their cachet and abilities to manage many competing demands in other policy areas, mayors are likely more able to focus schools on specific goals. Likewise, potential collaborators face varying demands and executives can focus outside collaborators on the issues important to schools better than superintendents or school boards. Furthermore, should they control multiple actors pursuing collaborations, mayors can authoritatively align goals among subordinates.

Cumulatively, mayoral control should theoretically overcome the management issues endemic to school-service collaborations in Providence. The previous section, on the other hand, shows that participants most frequently identify these factors as collaborative roadblocks in both cities. Such similarities may indicate that practice does not evolve as mayoral control theory suggests. Beyond management factors, the next section shows two additional issues participants say they commonly confront.

**Stability Issues**

The degree to which collaborations received stable attention frequently arose in discussions in both Rochester and Providence. While collaboration's agenda presence altered the importance given to this work, turnover influenced not only agendas, but also partners' abilities to maintain attention through staff and leadership churn.

**Agenda presence.** Those in positions of power advanced agendas in ways that can benefit and hurt collaborations. Regarding mayoral agendas, one Providence participant said, "I have the comfort of knowing that this kind of stuff I'm doing is the kind of stuff the Mayor

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supports." In this regard, political support allowed her to build relationships and programs with long-term focus. In Rochester, a participant expressed similar sentiment, but with regard to superintendent priorities. "I have authority," she said with confidence based on the superintendent's agenda, "it doesn't necessarily bring credibility but it brings urgency." Because outsiders knew the superintendent emphasized an issue, they worked collaboratively on what they knew the district prioritized. Additionally, agendas can provide authoritative draw that can be used to promote collaboration. Explaining one state initiative, a Rochester informant reported "State policy is prioritizing expanded learning, so when you say what gives you credibility in some cases it's that they have to, right?" However, once actors comply around these issues, she said discussions often sought out different motives, "You can do it for compliance or you can do it because it's strategic. Let's shift away from doing things for compliance and recognize that that's an opportunity to do things strategically." In this case, while state initiatives led to collaborations with schools, conversations sought to move organizations and individuals toward more strategic thinking and away from mere compliance.

While some participants stated plainly that support for collaborative action was more difficult without agendas promoting such activity, others provided examples of how agendas can outweigh other factors beneficial to collaboration. Within the context of an already established and funded collaboration with schools, one stakeholder spoke about the lead organization's former president, who led the group during collaborative initiatives. She explained, "The other president was very clear that she was not interested in this program…and when the grant expired, it was pretty much said, get your boxes ready." The president's attitude toward this initiative was one factor this participant identified as a barrier to buy-in among collaborators. Further, she implied that she had little incentive to put in more effort while knowing the initiative was likely

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to expire once funding ceased.  In another example of agendas undermining school collaborations, one Rochester stakeholder detailed how "the new mayor is working very hard to do things like establish charter schools, which seem to fly directly in the face of improving relationships with the district." In this case, charter school promotion fueled disbelief in the mayor's stated desire to work closely with the district. In Rochester's example, multiple participants echoed this, believing preponderance with schools-of-choice eroded relationships needed to work collaboratively.

**Turnover.** Staff and leadership turnover negatively influenced other collaborative issues. One Providence informant whose organization works extensively with schools said, "We're dealing with our fourth person in three years and then there's the superintendent above that. The impact that that has on organizations that are collaborating and partnering—it becomes very difficult." This quote came from a larger discussion of the issues influencing her organization's ability to develop ties to partner schools. Some also discussed how turnover can influence resources. One Rochester operator in an area heavily financed by private foundations explained how persistent turnover plays a role in the city's grant competitiveness: "That ability to attract those national funders is somewhat lessened when we have this constant turnover and we have this disconnect and this kind of turmoil." New players also required additional and repetitive efforts to align goals. "We're constantly updating people who are now new to the work," one frustrated Providence stakeholder described, "Some of that was a massive work, and they're all on a different page." Finally, staff and especially leadership brought new agendas that shaped collaborative work. One Rochester collaborator used the mayoralty as example: "It's the nature of the office. It's hard to build a continuity…Each mayor has their own natural network. Thus,

their own leadership, thus their own methodology and implementation, and what they identify as what's a priority."

Frequent turnover impeded collaborative strengths and exacerbated problems confronting partnerships due to relationships, resources, goal alignment, or agenda attention. Turnover also altered partners' willingness to collaborate in the first place. While explaining her difficulty in continually trying to recruit partners, a participant described a common sentiment: "What they do is they protect themselves and they just sort of say this will go away—'Yes, this too will pass.'" Frustration with turnover around social services issues requiring long-term and sustained attention to branch across providers led stakeholders to approach collaborations skeptically rather than enthusiastically.

As with management factors, participants in both cities commonly highlight agenda and turnover issues as two roadblocks to school-service collaborations. Informants also discuss these stability issues with similar language, potentially showing that these may be problems unaddressed by mayoral control. However, just as mayoral control theories suggest executive authority may overcome management barriers, theories also suppose governance change will improve upon these stability issues.

**Mayoral Control's Theorized Benefit to Stability Issues**

Participants in Rochester and Providence highlight the ways collaboration's stable agenda presence shapes collaborative abilities. Furthermore, leadership and staff turnover frequently impede partnerships. Mayoral control, proponents argue, help alleviate both these pressures. Because mayors hold agenda setting advantages over other city actors due to their prominence, mayoral control will lead to agendas that include education and promote collaboration with other service providers more frequently. Findings from Chapter 3 support these contentions. As

informants conveyed, agendas prioritizing school-service collaborations can lend urgency and authority to collaborations and help develop partnerships with schools. Furthermore, mayoral leadership plays an important role not only in setting city agendas, but also in fostering agenda consensus within cities (Marschall & Shah, 2005). Thus, mayoral agenda influence is twofold: not only can mayors promote and lend authority to collaborations, but they also can direct outside agendas to the same priorities and alleviate agenda misalignment among collaborators.

Additionally, granting mayors formal education authority helps limit turnover issues. Hess (1999) finds that turnover affects both superintendent and school board positions. While the average tenure for urban superintendents in his study was less than three years and most initiated at least ten reforms, Hess also found that ambitious members seeking higher office often fill school boards and frequently leave office. Mayors, on the other hand, typically have at least four years to implement a more stable reform strategy even if they are only in office for a single term. By placing a more stable mayor that can focus on long-term goals in charge, mayoral control seeks to alleviate policy churn created by rapid and voluminous reform. Furthermore, stability alleviates collaboration difficulties and may generate buy-in among partners by overcoming the "this too shall pass" sentiments described by participants in both cities.

Traditionally governed education systems also must grapple with agenda misalignment spurred by turnover. Superintendents and school board members leave, and mayors may not be reelected or leave office for other reasons. Turnover among any of these actors likely introduces additional work to realign school-service collaboration agendas. In mayoral control systems, the three levels are likely aligned. While a mayor may change, school board and/or superintendent priorities are likely influenced by mayoral agendas. This type of inherent agenda alignment can help collaborative efforts move forward more quickly.

As with its theoretical benefits related to management issues, mayoral control supposedly addresses stability issues commonly identified in Rochester and Providence. However, given most participants in each city gravitate toward these issues in their descriptions of barriers to school-service collaborations, practice may not reflect theory.

**Summary: Similarities Despite Governance Differences**

This chapter shows that similar issues related to management and stability most frequently and broadly influence school collaborations in Rochester and Providence. Such congruence leads to three possibilities. First, issues facing school-service collaborations may not be addressed by mayoral control. However, as seen in this chapter's discussions, collaborative barriers in both cities are precisely those mayoral control should help overcome. Second, although mayoral control should help treat these issues, mayors may not use their authority to alleviate collaborative concerns. And third, mayoral authority may be ineffective when attempting to overcome collaborative roadblocks despite theoretical assumptions that mayoral control should ameliorate problems.

To better understand whether mayors effectively use their authority to overcome collaborative problems, three further questions emerge: 1) Do efforts exist throughout each city that seek to overcome barriers common to collaboration with schools? 2) If so, do mayors play roles in these initiatives, and are their roles related to their formal education policy authority? And 3) are there any other factors that influence the degree to which mayoral involvement can foster school-service collaborations? By answering these questions, Chapter 6 identifies whether mayors attempt to foster environments that promote school-service collaboration and to what degree they successfully do so.

**CHAPTER 6: Informal Rather Than Formal Power and Mayoral Limits**

Just as Rochester and Providence informants identify similar factors confronting education collaborations, so too do they describe comparable efforts to foster school-service partnerships and overcome the issues identified in Chapter 5. School and service providers in each city seek to minimize these concerns by building administrative bodies to promote and sustain collaborations. Even while facing similar issues and pursuing analogous initiatives, the two cities differ in how effectively they develop these collaboration-focused councils. In efforts to create one group in Providence, mayors helped establish and draw attention to the Children and Youth Cabinet, thus enabling its success. Comparatively little mayoral activity and less encouraging results in Rochester further highlight the important roles executives play. However, while Providence has mayoral control of schools, the tools employed by mayors do not come from their formal authority. Mayors relied primarily on their informal powers, those available to most mayors in mayor-council governance, and not those new powers enabled by laws granting Providence's mayor education policy authority. Combined with findings that both those in Rochester and Providence describe parallel concerns stemming from mayoral involvement, this chapter's findings raise doubts that mayoral control's logic and theory of action necessarily benefit school-service.

**Institutionalizing Collaborations: Diffuse in Rochester, Concentrated in Providence**

Participants in Rochester make clear their belief that consistent venues for joint planning have the power to change climates impeding collaborative processes. One provider who worked across various sectors says matter-of-factly,

> It's really about the policies and the dynamics that call for skilled, facilitated
>
> processes. With a clear sense of everybody's role, purpose, goal and what we're

all working together for, then the opportunity to regularly come together that

makes or breaks that work.

Even with the presupposition of goal alignment, this person believes collaborative efforts to be

greatly hindered without a formal and institutionalized venue to facilitate partnerships.

In their pursuit of these formal venues, informants in Rochester identified nine different

administrative bodies that attempted to create stronger bonds among collaborative groups. Some

of the groups described represented great breadth, including countywide initiatives to cope with

dwindling social services funding. Others had narrower focus—one group attempted to develop

cross-sector initiatives to benefit males of color. However, only three groups were identified by

more than one participant as important and actively trying to reshape Rochester's collaborative

environments: The Greater Rochester After School Alliance (GRASA), Mayor Lovely Warren's

Early Learning Council, and ROC the Future. While these groups continue to operate, factors

associated with each raise doubt about whether they will be successful in changing contexts

confronting collaborations in Rochester.

14-year-old GRASA serves as a roundtable for after school and extended learning time

initiatives. In this capacity, participants describe how it helps create a shared vision through

"shared language, shared framework, shared approaches, and all looking at quality from the same

lens." However, while informants acknowledge the productive work happening through GRASA

to define issues, align goals, and begin strategic planning to better promote a shared agenda, they

are also quick to acknowledge GRASA's limits. The primary limitation is its not being an

intermediary organization. In other words, unlike Providence's After School Alliance, GRASA

does not have the capacity to provide services beyond convening actors in plenary discussions.

This stems primarily from a lack of funding and limited staff. After listing three other districts

that work with intermediaries around extended learning issues, one participant explains how not having a similar intermediary in Rochester limits initiatives: "Other large districts that are doing this work have a partner that's external that deals with all the BS, deals with all the fingerprinting, the contracting. The district contracts with one agency." GRASA's co-chair also acknowledges these limitations. While positive about some fairly recent funding influx, she realizes there is a long way to go before it is able to serve intermediary purposes and influence change in desired ways: "We're getting closer but we still need additional investment if we're going to be a standalone independent intermediary." Although stakeholders acknowledge GRASA's importance as a stable forum to help align goals and build relationships, resource constraints limit its reach and influence.

Participants also identify recently inaugurated Mayor Warren's Early Learning Council (ELC) as an initiative to overcome barriers to collaboration. This Council sprouted from New York Governor Cuomo's competitive grant program to expand pre-K programming. Over 2014's first six months, the Early Learning Council's mission was to identify strengths and weaknesses in Rochester's pre-K system, develop a strategy to improve it, and advocate for state funding (City of Rochester, 2014). As of this writing, this group has not released its report or moved beyond initial planning stages. All participants who mention this initiative imply the important role the mayor had in directing attention toward pre-K issues. However, as one participant puts it, "There's nobody from the district at the table." Although the RCSD Board President sits on the Early Learning Council, the implication is that most discussions seem to ignore the district as a potential partner. Another informant wonders whether early childhood issues became a focus because they can move forward without district involvement. While considering this, she concedes, "I think that may have been part of it because it is hard working with urban school

districts." Two uncertainties accompany ELC descriptions. First, although the ELC successfully brings an issue to the agenda, its long-term sustainability is in flux. No participants know whether this is a one-time effort to form a pre-K plan and attract state funds or if this will become a standing initiative to continuously improve pre-K efforts in Rochester. Second, uncertainty exists regarding the degree to which ELC discussions would include the school district. Minimizing district involvement and keeping discussions somewhat disassociated from a broader set of stakeholders concerns participants. They believe the ELC may potentially erode relationships with the district and, as a result, limit the ELC's ability to engage RCSD. Thus, uncertainty about long-term efforts and worry about eroding relationships within Rochester make informants unsure about the Early Learning Council's ability to reshape school-service collaborations broadly.

Most frequently, Rochester stakeholders identify ROC the Future (RTF, pronounced "rock") as a group that works to break down barriers limiting collaboration. Unlike GRASA or the ELC, which have a narrow focuses and limited reach, RTF supports collaborative action around all aspects of a "cradle to career" timeline. It should also be noted that RTF is not a direct service provider. Rather, its explicit goal is to serve "as a catalyst for working together, across sectors and along the educational continuum, to drive better results in education" (ROC the Future, 2014). In this way, RTF works toward reshaping political environments similar to Providence's CYC. Unlike the CYC, one participant describes RTF as being "in its infancy stages." Even given its youth, informants suggest RTF already breaks down barriers to collaboration and aligns goals in ways promoting collaborative issues on organizational agendas. One explains that it has become "a communitywide forum to say '[collaboration] is a priority.'" Another identifies RTF's current focus on developing and maintaining its credibility among the

district and service providers is because "if it has credibility, then other people will align their resources with it." As one participant considers ROC the Future's growing role, she explains its mission is now not only about getting organizations to come "to the table and agree, but actually go up away from the table" and create partnerships. Although stakeholders frequently reference ROC the Future as an effort to promote school-service collaborations, its relative newness tempers positivity due to uncertainty about long-term effectiveness and sustainability.

Even though Rochesterians mention many different collaborative entities, multiple sources discuss only three current efforts. Both GRASA and the Early Learning Council have narrow scopes and other limits to their overall ability to alter collaborative landscapes. ROC the Future takes a broader approach and specifically aims to change political environments shaping partnerships by addressing the issues raised in Chapter 5 to. However, many questions remain as it evolves past its recent inception.

When asked about efforts that overcome the issues outlined in Chapter 5, informants in Providence most frequently provide two examples. One is the Providence After School Alliance (PASA). While the PASA builds the capacity of those engaging in extended learning time efforts, its narrow focus limits its ability to change political environments facing school-service collaborations more broadly. Indeed, as one person reminds, PASA's importance in Providence collaborations is "an offshoot of their role as an intermediary organization to provide services to others. So, while it *is* a collaboration, its goal is not to foster collaboration." Instead, those interviewed in Providence almost unanimously acknowledge one institutionalized effort promoting collaborations between the district and service providers: The Providence Children and Youth Cabinet (CYC). The CYC's mission reflects this broad focus, and seeks to make

organizations more strategic in their work while fostering partnerships that benefit children from cradle to career (Providence Children & Youth Cabinet, n.d.).

A key benefit to the CYC's work is its ability to foster productive relationships. Upon considering her long career in Providence and elsewhere, one participant remarks: "To sit in a meeting and we're just people, it's not about title, it's not about whose organization is bigger or any of that stuff. To me that's an indicator of real collaboration." Throughout her effusive praise, this collaborator often mentions how the CYC is unlike other efforts to build relationships because people behave in this manner rather than competitively. Another informant from a relatively successful organization (and CYC participant) describes her feelings: "I'm happy for this CYC thing at my peril. I think we can get more leverage if we're all working together. It's worth it." Through this, she explains how in a time of limited funding, attention and money flowing to the CYC likely means less for her organization. However, even when it may take away from an individual organization, the citywide benefits make such tradeoffs worthwhile.

Similarly, the CYC helps align goals among its members. Following her discussion about disjointed goals being a crippling factor to collaborations, one executive does not hesitate when asked what helped overcome such issues: "I think the CYC is doing a good job at what I talked about—in really developing what our priorities are." After discussing a long list of collaborations happening within her organization, another informant explicitly acknowledges the CYC's role: "These things probably would not have happened if we didn't have the relationships that had been established, and the face-time together, and the kind of common understanding of…priorities, goals, values that the CYC has allowed us to develop." Paired with its ability to strengthen relationships and move past competitive impulses, Providence social service actors extol the CYC's ability to align goals and promote strategic action within Providence.

Although positive descriptions far outnumber negative, some participants identify issues confronting the CYC, especially around agendas and resources. With regard to keeping CYC initiatives on its member organizations' agendas, one member explains that "there are certainly people who are interested in what the CYC is doing and call themselves members but aren't necessarily active." Beyond individual and organizational agendas, informants also describe difficulty in maintaining mayoral attention to the CYC because "they don't have as many staff that align with education in the mayor's office. They're all into business." However, the implication is not that the CYC struggles to make it onto city leadership or service provider agendas. Rather, stakeholders express their desire to continually cultivate attention among members and city leadership to strengthen school-service collaborations across the city.

One of the primary challenges confronting the otherwise successful CYC is resource cultivation. Financially, one participant says, "The big challenge CYC faces is doing all this planning and not being able to get the money, because there's not much money in our state for grants and aid." Funding generation is not the only concern. Another highlights concerns about "aligning funding. Even in a small city, funding gets siloed." That is, funding may be hard to access by partners because it remains earmarked for specific purposes or flows to parts of organizations relatively removed from partnerships. Beyond monetary resources, limited staffing capacities also concern participants. Although the CYC has a small professional staff including a full-time director, member organizations lack staffing resources to commit to the CYC. "People are already motivated and engaged," explains one participant, but "some staffing towards [the CYC]" would be beneficial. Another sums up these issues and broader sentiments on what can help the CYC further galvanize collaborative environments: "I don't know what else could happen other than financial resources and ensuring that their offices are engaged."

Despite resource and agenda challenges confronting the CYC, stakeholders in Providence are overwhelmingly positive. It has become a powerful force in developing partnerships around education, and participants often struggle to think of other entities that can or could serve this purpose. One informant says the CYC is "an amazing organization, bringing together almost every single social service agency that serves kids in the city of Providence and the education system." Another says with relation to the CYC's mission, "I don't know if there are other organizations, other than the CYC, … that explicitly it's their role to build strategic partnerships." Considering all other initiatives in Providence, she concludes the CYC "is the biggest catalyst for collaboration in the city." Finally, another participant expresses confusion when asked if another group exists that has similar aims: "Literally, everybody in Providence is involved in [the CYC], you wouldn't need [another organization]."

In total, the CYC is the primary entity developing partnerships across organizational boundaries in Providence. It effectively works to strengthen relationships and align goals among collaborators. Further, although those interviewed feel it still has work to do to secure resources and maintain agenda focus among collaborators and city leadership, they acknowledge that the CYC remains a young organization and continues to improve in these areas. Near the end of one conversation, a participant sums up her feelings about the CYC: "An entity like the CYC, I wish it for other communities, because there's a need for people to come together around the table."

**Informal Rather Than Formal Mayoral Influence**

Mayors in Rochester play very limited roles in developing school-service collaborations. Formally, mayors have little authority to accomplish much with schools. While the city is beholden to the Maintenance of Effort requirement to give RCSD $119 million annually (also discussed in Chapter 4), the district retains its budget authority. While mayors can direct budget

items elsewhere to focus on schools, they do not frequently do so. This is probably unsurprising, as the city's budget remains heavily constrained with very little discretionary money available for new partnerships. One Rochester informant explains that if budgetary authority over potential collaborators was not split between the city and RCSD, the ability to develop programs "would be different." With other formal powers like administrator appointment, formal board memberships, and legislative/veto abilities, split governance in Rochester limits mayoral formal abilities to unite schools and other services.

Informally, participants explain how a series of events strained relationships, limiting recent Rochester mayoral abilities to help align district and city collaborative policies. While instances exist where recent Rochester mayors used their informal ability to command attention, they did so on education issues where RCSD is not a necessary player. For example, Mayor Duffy used his stature to bring community and government leaders together to improve youth and family literacy. These efforts primarily focused on early childhood education and work within the community through the library system. After a short time, multiple participants explained that this effort "fizzled" due to shifting interests, including an increased belief in working outside RCSD via charter schools. Mayor Richards similarly helped bring community leaders together to pursue Wallace Foundation money for after-school outside learning programs, an initiative that was ultimately unsuccessful. Finally, the section above describes Mayor Warren's Early Learning Council and how Rochester participants suggest RCSD is not a serious partner in that effort. Most accounts describe that many different events strain relationships with the district and perhaps make mayoral informal influence weaker on school projects. The Maintenance of Effort requirements strain relationships because the city feels it should have some say in district affairs given this funding arrangement. Similarly, many identify Mayor

Duffy's mayoral control pursuits and Mayor Warren's support for charter school policies as strains on district-city relations. All these events make for a district that is alienated by city policies, and a city that seemingly feels it can pursue an education agenda outside RCSD to avoid acrimony.

In Providence, formal policy levers were not the primary driver of mayoral CYC support. Budgets did not include funds for the CYC, and even today as the organization grows, its funding comes from outside foundations. Though plans are in the works to broaden funding, the primary financial support has not been from the mayor's office. Informants also do not describe instances where mayors exercised their ability to convene formal governmental bodies or formally direct agendas through official statements.

Multiple participants also describe that they wish the mayor's office would appoint staff to the CYC. Mayor Taveras became the first Providence mayor to create an education advisor position. However, this person was not formally appointed to liaise with the CYC. One participant says this person "was kind of [a formal CYC staff member], but it was just as the education person for the Mayor's office." Instead, this education advisor did not focus primarily on CYC activities. Furthermore, after this person left the mayor's office in 2013, the mayor did not refill the position. This all suggests than rather direct formal staffing resources to the CYC, the education advisor's 15-month involvement primarily stemmed from being the only staff for all education issues. The further unwillingness by Mayor Taveras to appoint a new education point person might further show a lack of formal resources dedicated to the CYC.

Rather than through formal means, the consistent picture emerging in Providence is one where mayors influenced the CYC using their symbolic roles as public leader and not powers vested in them by law. When describing the CYC, participants explain mayors Cicilline and

Taveras played incredibly important roles in developing and sustaining attention to collaborative initiatives. However, when prodded on the actions taken by mayors, they often describe mayors as utilizing their "bully pulpit" as the city's head. When restating to one participant the events she described, she confirmed that calling mayoral actions largely symbolic due to their office's stature was "a good way of describing it."

The CYC sprung from efforts to secure U. S. Department of Education Promise Neighborhood money in 2010. Many different accounts detail how multiple groups organized proposals for this funding, and eventually, the mayor intervened in hopes they would consolidate into a single plan. Says one participant:

> Everybody was fighting. You know, "The Promise neighborhood should be with
> this group of collaborators," "No, the Promised Neighborhood should be..."
> Cicilline was just like, "Time out. Time out. I'm going to use my bully pulpit to
> say, we are small enough city that we can get a comprehensive approach…we
> cannot compete against ourselves. We need to figure out how to work together."

It was not due to any formal authority that the mayor was able to accomplish this. Rather, as Morgan and Watson (1996) described in their classification of informal power, the mayor was able to "broker agreements and build political coalitions" (p. 116) by prodding the different Promise Neighborhood grant seekers. This behavior did not stem from formal control over the collaborators, but was buoyed by mayoral leadership traits and political cachet.

Similarly, CYC members explain how it successfully grew membership. One stakeholder thinks "the fact that the former mayor convenes the CYC, that brought people to the table." Another current CYC member recounts the quick decision process to join the growing CYC: "Someone came to me and said, 'Mayor's Cabinet,' and I said, 'Alright, we need to be at the

table.'" The mayor did not hold formal authority to compel groups to join. They did not receive budgetary allocations, and they were not appointed by mayors to pursue collaborations. Furthermore, although the participant above used the term "convene," this was not done in any formalized way. There was no dedicated staff, funding, or formal city action to establish the CYC. Instead, the mayor informally convened leaders from across the city to engage in discussions about collaborating around education initiatives. The mayor's stature, not formalized policy actions, galvanized attention among service organizations.

Beyond informally convening and encouraging membership, mayoral informal agenda setting power also helped sustain the CYC. Recall that agenda setting powers may be formal, like legislative proposals or the ability to determine the choices open to other actors. This power may also be informal, such as in instances where mayors substantively shape agendas through their influence without mechanisms that allow them to limit considerations. One CYC member describes the organization's early direction:

> We were smaller and uncertain of who we were and what our agenda was, and we
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> had not built our own infrastructure and determined what the vision was for the
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> community. We were very dependent upon the mayor to kind of give us marching
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> orders and to convene and to sort of set an agenda, and for him to say, "My
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> priorities…I really believe in this."

The mayors did not formally act to shape agendas. Rather, uncertainty created a sort of power vacuum that allowed the mayor to loosely set directives for the CYC. As the most prominent public figure in Providence, this shaped how the group acted in its pursuit of service collaborations. Mayoral agenda setting power has since dwindled, further suggesting that power wielded early was of the informal variety. In late 2012, the Annenberg Institute for School

Reform became the CYC's institutional home, and due to private funding it hired professional staff. This provided the group additional ability to plan and act on its own, without the mayor. Indeed, removing mayoral branding after this professionalization (becoming Providence CYC rather than remain the Mayor's CYC) signals the lack of formal authority mayors had over the group.

Throughout study of the CYC, formal authority never became a prevailing theme. At no point did Providence participants say mayors used their ability to allocate funds, appoint staff, or direct other bodies to work aggressively with the CYC. Rather than use "features of an executive office established by constitution, charter, or law" (Morgan & Watson, 1996, p. 116), mayors relied on their stature as public figure to encourage membership and fill agenda voids during the CYC's youth. The CYC's subsequent move away from mayors suggests a general weariness to heavily rely on mayors. Indeed, as the next section shows, participants in both cities gave indications why formal powers may not be most effective when developing collaborations.

**Events vs. Processes: Potential Limits to Formal Power Assumptions**

Much of mayoral control's logic assumes that new policy tools, granted by law, will benefit school-service collaborations because a mayor then has ability to formally pursue such efforts. They can allocate funds, appoint the right people, and ensure accountability to collaborative ideals when they are administratively responsible for schools and other collaborators. This logic rests on an inherent intersection of top-down and short-run theories of change.

Top-down theories of change assume that executive initiatives will trickle down and foster service collaboration with schools. That is, mayors are uniquely situated to mobilize resources and dismantle barriers to partnerships when they have more formal authority to do so. However, Kahne and Kelley (1993) warn, "What some view as local, intimate, and supportive

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settings may be experienced by others as coercive, intrusive, and constraining" (p. 189).

Considering the importance participants in both cities place on relationships and goal alignment, this study's analyses suggest that top-down approaches ignore issues undergirding successful collaboration. For example, as collaborators struggle to cede control and open their operations to joint work, they may negatively view both informal and authoritative mayoral efforts to open organizations. In response, partners' hesitance may instead be reaffirmed due to perceived mayoral coercion. Similarly, actors may feel constrained when collaborations are tied to mayors. Such constraints may make organizations unlikely to share aligned goals with other partners, which can stymie collaborative efforts. Indeed, each city's informants speak positively about collaborative councils like the CYC or ROC the Future because they are community-led. Better than mayor-led initiatives, they argue, community-based approaches overcome the factors identified in Chapter 5 without imposing partnerships from above. Thus, mayoral control produces an inherent tension: while it offers more formal powers to pursue partnerships with schools, these tools may be used in ways that undermine collaborations over time.

Mayoral control as a method to improve school collaborations also rests on a short-run theory of change, which assumes that partnerships will be maintained after mayors successfully initiate them. In their study of 1960s anti-poverty efforts, Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) describe this theory of change as one "designed to get something done in a hurry, after which it would presumably be all right for events to take their usual course…get in fast, get the job done, move out, turn it over to [others]…" (pp. 131-132). However, their study shows that short-run theories of action fail when efforts require prolonged action to achieve their goals. To borrow Pressman and Wildavsky's (1984) language, if mayor-led collaborations get in fast and get the job done (i.e. induce groups to work together whether they like it or not), those left to sustain the

initiative may be unfamiliar with how to overcome recurrent collaborative issues like those identified in Chapter 5. Therefore, while desirable in the short-run, these reforms inhibit long-run collaborative capacities—initial planners and implementers move on and leave a new group to engage in processes they may not have undertaken previously.

Sustainability concerns expressed in both cities highlight worry about top-down and short-run theories of action. "Partnership is not an event," one participant states, "It's a process…You don't just hook somebody up and say, 'Yeah, you're my partner. You're going to understand me. You're going to do all the services that I need.'" Initiatives that treat collaboration as an event, or something that could be formed in a top-down manner, tend to focus on initial changes without acknowledging the difficult work required to overcome common issues like those discussed in Chapter 5. Many other stakeholders mention similar concerns about the process of school-service collaborations and express skepticism about how effective efforts tied to specific leaders would be.

One informant describes cultivating this community support as the issue she most worries about when trying to build a formal group to foster collaboration:

> We have a new superintendent on average every two or three years. But, the new
> folks bring in a new natural network, new administration, new leadership, new
> business. It's carried out differently. You can't build any success. However, when
> you have a strong community that works outside of those public institutions, and
> you have a groundswell of support, the constant comes from outside of those
> institutions. The constant is the community.

This person employs the term "groundswell" repeatedly throughout the conversation, which is also used by others to describe initiatives of this nature. As they talk, it becomes clear that the

groundswell is two-fold. First, there needs to be a broad and community-based group of actors promoting the school-service collaborations. Second, the demand for such partnerships must be sustained from the community so that top decision makers in school districts and cities will be forced to pursue school-service linkages. Another stakeholder bluntly agrees by saying any effort to coordinate schools and other social services "has to be a community approach in order for it to sustain." This runs contrary to short-run theories of change as developing a groundswell of community support and demand cannot be done quickly, according to participants.

Such broadly based approaches insulate collaborations' top-down and short-run pitfalls. As one participant observes, "We have become dependent on these catalytic, heroic leaders. And unfortunately, it just all unravels once that person is dethroned." Instead, community-based drive to develop collaborative approaches to social problems will "surpass the need for a singular inspirational, catalytic leader." If tied to a single leader, any shift in that individual's agenda or change in ability to mobilize collaborative resources can cripple an effort. Thus, creating a groundswell of attention to school-service collaborations not only encourages leaders to work on the initiatives, but also prevents work from being overly tied to individuals.

For these reasons, Rochester participants are hesitant to deeply involve mayors with their initiatives. "Government leadership changes," one person frankly begins, slightly irritated by the notion mayors can solve these issues, "This is why I tell people all the time, 'You can't just depend on government.' That sounds crazy, but you really can't." One ROC the Future member reiterates this point and explains, "It's important for us to wield power outside of the municipality." Although participants mention the mayor as sympathetic to ROC the Future's cause, none suggest mayors play an active role in developing the group's collaborative capacities. It should be noted that the City of Rochester has a representative from the mayor's

office listed as a RTF convener. However, this person never arose in discussions of those actively moving ROC the Future forward in its efforts to build and support collaborations among schools and service providers.

In Providence, one CYC member explains decisions to divest the group of the mayor's office because they were worried about problems inherent to top-down and short-run regimes:

> We had a big meeting yesterday. It was really the beginning of our own, as a committee, continuously doing the process and identifying our purpose, identifying our problems and how we're going to change them. It all gets to: how do we take the CYC to be something that's beyond the Mayor's work? Because mayors change—odds are it's going to change, right? He may run for governor. We have other people running for mayor; I have no idea what they think right now.
>
> We have to have this thing live on its own, regardless of who is mayor, and I've been pushing that stuff for three years—and I love our mayor, but it's not about him. That's great that he did it, but we're not going to see outcomes of the work of the CYC for another two, three, four years. I know that. I mean, politicians want a quick change. I get that, and I don't say that disrespectfully, because it's in their best interest.

Other participants corroborate the above, noting how the decision to change from the Mayor's Children and Youth Cabinet, as it was formerly called, to the Providence Children and Youth Cabinet was more than just rebranding. As one participant cautions, "If it's the Mayor's Children and Youth Cabinet, it's the mayor's. For better or for worse, it's tied to the mayor's identity and the mayor's priorities." To move away from this reliance on an individual or an office and

toward a broader community-driven collaborative approach, all members decided to remove formal ties to the mayor's office—a divorce they say Mayor Taveras also supports.

These sustainability concerns may help underscore why formal powers were not used in Providence. Perhaps mayors realized that using formal powers to pursue collaboration in a top-down manner could limit these efforts to short-run influence. It could also be that the tactics mayors use in collaboration development are simply not derived from mayoral control reforms. As discussed in Chapter 7, it is hard to disentangle why mayors operate in the ways they do. Formal changes might motivate mayors, even if the tools they use are informal and available without governance change. But, based on these two cases, it appears that although mayors can greatly help collaborative movements, it is not due to formal powers as suggested by mayoral control logic.

## Summary: Mayors' Informal Importance

This chapter's findings confirm the important roles played by mayors in developing collaborative environments but also show mayoral limits. Rochester's diffuse collaborative environment stems from many overlapping bodies over time, strained relationships among city and school district actors, and an apparent dearth of mayoral initiative to link schools and other actors. Meanwhile, Providence consolidated its ability to pursue collaboration into a broad and diverse group. A primary driving force behind this was mayoral involvement. However, Providence mayors did not use their formal powers as hypothesized by mayoral control's logic. Instead, they relied on informal powers that were not provided by governance reform. Mayoral control rests on top-down and short-run theories of change, and participants in each city express sustainability concerns when trying to pursue collaboration in either manner. Cumulatively, these findings should give pause to assumptions that formal authority inherently benefits collaboration.

# CHAPTER 7: Mayor-Centrism's Tensions

The intersection of economic and social issues negatively influencing children is most concentrated in urban areas. Because student outcomes are not shaped only by events happening in schools, collaborations seek to link social, health, and economic issues with students' education to comprehensively benefit students. Proponents of one reform, mayoral control, advance it as a method to promote collaboration between schools and various other providers who have links to mayors. In two parts, this study investigates mayoral control's theoretical benefits to school-service collaborations.

Part 1 asks whether mayors advance agendas that include education and school-service collaborations and if mayors in mayoral control cities have agendas covering these issues with different frequency or more detail. It suggests that mayors in mayoral control cities more frequently highlight education issues, discuss collaborations with more detail, and more often include education in detailed collaborative dialogues. When comparing education collaborations to those including other actors, school partnerships receive relatively more emphasis from mayors with formal education policy authority. Overall, these findings are congruent with mayoral control theories and show school-service collaborations receive more agenda attention in mayoral control cities.

Part 2 uses case studies in mayoral controlled Providence and traditionally governed Rochester. These two cities provide ideal contrasting cases because mayors in both cities frequently include school collaborations in their agendas and the cities have similar demographic characteristics. Thus, the primary difference between the two stems from their contrasting education governance arrangements and provides opportunity to investigate mayoral control's collaborative benefits.

Two sets of primary findings emerge from case studies. First, although one would expect different concerns to confront collaborations in cities with mayoral control because executive authority should overcome barriers, this is not the case. Instead, the same factors hinder school-service collaborations in each city. Coupled with the fact these issues are precisely those mayoral control should fix, these findings may suggest two possibilities: either mayors do not work to overcome collaborative problems, or they do so ineffectively.

Second, case studies investigate whether mayors play roles in efforts to overcome collaborative problems and whether mayors in mayoral control cities operate differently and in ways reliant on their formal education policy authority. Although Providence's mayors actively help develop a cabinet fostering school-service collaboration citywide, and Rochester's mayors fail to play important roles in similar initiatives, Providence mayors do not operate in ways dependent on their formal education policy authority. When considered alongside sustainability concerns in both cities about mayoral involvement in school-service partnerships, these findings cumulatively raise doubts about mayoral control's theoretical benefits to collaborations.

Although this study finds insufficient evidence to support theory's contentions that mayors use their formal authority over education to foster school collaboration, other unexplained possibilities might influence these findings. It may be that governance reforms realign incentives for mayoral involvement in Providence such that executives utilize their informal powers. However, incentives for involvement also exist in non-mayoral control cities—school-service collaborations may benefit a city's schools (e.g. improved academics), health systems (e.g. more targeted preventative care for children), safety (e.g. lower crime rates corresponding with improved school outcomes), or economy (e.g. stronger schools and other systems may attract a larger tax base).

Indeed, some research shows that mayors in traditional school governance systems help reshape collaboration's political environments using powers similar to those utilized in Providence. For example, Kirst and Edelstein (2006) highlight former Long Beach Mayor Beverly O'Neill's involvement in school affairs. Her working relationship with district leadership, the authors argue, led to increased attention to educational issues. Further, Mayor O'Neill's work without formal authority helped direct resources toward after school and health collaborations with the district (Kirst & Edelstein, 2006). These types of tools are available to many mayors, including those in Providence and Rochester, and factors other than formal education policy authority likely dictate their usage.

Given findings such as those in Long Beach, the question then becomes whether marginal incentives for collaboration in mayoral control systems are different and more powerful than otherwise existing motivations. While this study's data do not speak to this possibility, it seems unlikely that incentives caused by mayoral control would matter vastly more to mayors than those unrelated to formal governance.

**Theoretical Implications**

This study's findings have implications for mayoral control theories. Considering the previous two chapters' results, mayoral control's ability to broaden constituencies concerned with education and enhance democratic accountability may also undermine school-service collaboration.

Although mayoral control broadens constituencies concerned with education, it may also hurt collaborations due to shifting political environments. As the population involved in education policy increasingly resembles other city policies, education politics similarly parallel generalist politics. Indeed, research suggests these changes happened as executives, legislatures,

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and courts asserted themselves in education policy over the past 50 years (Henig, 2013). However, just as new political arrangements allow for the reconceptualization away from education as a school-only issue, these same politics may also hinder collaborative reforms. At their core, collaborations involving social services are redistributive in nature. That is, they gather resources broadly and then focus them narrowly (in this case, toward those receiving coordinated services). Such reforms are typically "treated by a variety of strategies designed to forestall, delay, and preclude their implementation" (Peterson, 1981, p. 182). Thus, Peterson (1981) finds that local governments seldom undertake redistributive issues because municipal politics make redistribution contentious and difficult to accomplish. This study shows how collaboration requires continuous effort to do things like mobilize resources or cope with staff and leadership turnover. However, shifting political environments may restrict partnerships in two ways: by initially making politics less conducive to the redistribution coordinated services require and by likely mobilizing political opposition that makes sustained collaboration harder.

Enhanced democratic accountability also creates potential tensions with collaborative goals. One way electoral accountability may undermine collaborative goals is through mayoral turnover. As new mayors enter, they likely also bring new agendas. Even if somewhat congruent with collaborative efforts preceding them, new mayors represent a disruption. In the worst case, new mayors enter with completely different collaborative agendas. As this study's findings show, consistent agenda attention can be a large boon to partnerships, and turnover may alter how initiatives evolve. Furthermore, these agenda fluctuations may be greater in magnitude than churn created by superintendent turnover because school boards mediate superintendent power. Tension also exists due to the likelihood mayors pursue efforts showing returns in the short-run. Electoral incentives promote this—if a mayor can claim proficiency rates improved under her

watch, she may win electoral favor. Collaborations among schools and service providers, however, often do not yield short-term benefits. Thus, mayoral control may disincentivize collaboration absent short-term returns while disrupting school-service collaborations with mayoral turnover.

Recent work shows how mayoral control changes political systems in ways that might hurt collaborations. Chambers (2006) finds that mayoral control systems lead to political disenfranchisement among low-income minorities. These findings may negatively affect collaborations in two ways. First, clients targeted by collaborative programs may be unable to inform a partnership's missions. Absent client input, school-service collaborations may not adequately assess the issues facing families and fail to help in ways most needed. Second, if disenfranchised by their political environment, citizens may withdraw from other system efforts. Absent voice in their political system, citizens targeted by school-service initiatives may instead withdraw from public institutions to show dissatisfaction (Hirschman, 1970). When benefits to collaboration require participants use services, exit from the system eliminates potential benefits. In these ways, mayoral control's political effects may undermine school-service collaborations.

**Policy and Practice Implications**

These findings suggest that opportunities exist for mayors to alter practice in ways that promote school-service collaboration. Mayors can use their informal power to reframe education and social issues in ways that promote partnerships among providers. Beyond conveying agendas that include school-service collaborations, mayors can mobilize monetary and political resources. Mayors can lobby private entities, city councils, state governments, and even the federal government for funds. Further, mayors can do this more effectively than any other single city actor (Meier, 2004). Mayors can also create or reallocate staff positions to liaise with schools and

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various service agencies. As seen in Providence, mayoral support can fuel administrative councils trying to foster collaboration. Sustained efforts in any of these areas may benefit a city's collaborative environments.

Policy can also positively alter factors influencing collaborative work. For example, policy can induce collaboration via resource allocation and through capacity-building reforms. Indeed, Promise Neighborhoods provide one example where funding targeted programs uniting schools and many different service providers. Furthermore, these funds induced Mayor Cicilline to start Providence's Children and Youth Cabinet, spurring change far beyond Providence's Promise Neighborhood grant proposal. State policies can similarly incentivize school-service collaborations, as can philanthropic funders. However, policies may have limited influence on collaborative processes if targeting specific programs. According to this study's data, more influential policies would seek to foster sustained political environments or develop collaborative capacities of city stakeholders. Put another way, policies should not target only schools, city governments, or non-profits to undertake specific programs. Rather, initiatives should also prioritize bringing actors from various areas together over time. One policy may target administrative cabinets, like Providence's Children and Youth Cabinet or ROC the Future. Resource allocations may allow groups like these to professionalize and operate in ways that can help create a self-sustaining collaborative network around education and youth issues.

**Limitations and Future Research**

This study has three primary limitations. First, it is unable to speak to the aforementioned incentives for informal mayoral action. While this study draws from current or former mayoral staff in both cities, none identify governance as a chief concern when considering school collaborations in either city. Further, none can speak directly to *why* mayors involve themselves

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in school-service collaborations (or do not involve themselves), or why they use certain powers and not others. Scenarios may exist where marginal incentives under mayoral control spur informal executive action. However, although this study finds it unlikely that these marginal incentives primarily drive mayors' informal power usage, it cannot be certain without data about mayoral motivations.

Second, limitations may stem from the study's sample. Broader participant recruitment may introduce new and differing perspectives about the issues influencing collaboration and each city's efforts to address these concerns. However, given the consistent indications from those participating in this study, it seems unlikely that completely different issues would arise. Because informants so frequently identify similar issues, and these factors far outweighed others, it seems more likely that broader sampling would further highlight these themes and their saliency in relation to other issues could become more pronounced.

Third, while site selection isolates for contrasting governance arrangements in relatively similar places, governance may play different roles in different types of cities. For example, mayors in larger cities may encounter more constraints to their ability to influence collaboration. It may be that informal power influences potential collaborators less when a larger city includes more actors, so mayors instead rely on their formal powers. Even if this scenario unfolds, it seems unlikely to develop sustainable collaborations. Given skepticism about mayoral involvement in school-service collaborations in Rochester and Providence, authoritative mayoral actions may undermine collaborator abilities to deal with the many issues they confront. Should mayoral involvement fluctuate or wane in these circumstances, partnership bonds may dissolve because they relied on a mayor's commitment.

Future research should begin to explore these potential shortcomings. Studies can incorporate other cities to learn about the political issues confronting their collaborative systems. Should these studies arrive at similar conclusions, they add important confirmatory findings. Should they dissimilarly find collaborative environments to be altered more directly by governance reforms, it may be that other city features mediate governance's role. In either case, new theories may be generated about the ways school governance may or may not influence school-service collaborations.

Additionally, this study occurs at a time when initiatives in Providence and Rochester are relatively young. As Providence's Children and Youth Cabinet and ROC the Future age, new issues may influence them. In the future, the CYC or RTF could struggle or excel as they develop broad engagement around school-service collaborations. Research can identify what dictates success or failure and investigate roles played by mayors and governance structures in CYC and RTF evolution.

Research must also explore the interactions between political environments and practice. Do more conducive political environments achieved through efforts like the CYC or ROC the Future produce collaborations that are more effective? Although political environments may help collaborative planning and initiative creation, it may be that street-level implementers encounter problems unrelated to and unaddressed by CYC efforts. Future investigation should examine these issues in schools and other service agencies to understand what factors influence on-the-ground work, whether these issues align with those expressed by leadership, and whether efforts like the CYC adequately address street-level problems.

**Conclusion**

To borrow from one participant, "event" and "process" descriptions capture the essence of both this study and research on the politics of education broadly. This study suggests that mayoral control reform events are likely insufficient to alter the processes of building collaborations among schools and other services. Moreover, tensions accompanying mayoral control may undermine the very collaborative processes that it is partially predicated on building.

Understanding education politics is similarly a process-oriented enterprise. On the whole, research does not pay enough attention to the political environments in which schools operate. These contexts shape which reforms are considered, help decide which become enacted, and influence which succeed or fail. This study investigates a fraction of political issues influencing efforts to develop broad and sustainable school-service collaborations. However, to fully understand the ways education policy can overcome the varied issues influencing students, future research must continue to examine the ways politics influence school-service linkages.

**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: List of Cities Included in State of the City Sample**
(Cities with * excluded from analyses for lack of speeches)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Abilene, TX* | Dayton, OH | New York, NY |
| Amarillo, TX* | Denver, CO | Newark, NJ |
| Des Moines, IA* | Detroit, MI | Newport News, VA |
| Killeen, TX* | Durham, NC | Norfolk, VA |
| Lubbock, TX* | Eugene, OR | Oakland, CA |
| Odessa, TX* | Evansville, IN | Peoria, IL |
| Plano, TX* | Fayetteville, NC | Philadelphia, PA |
| Pomona, CA* | Flint, MI | Pittsburgh, PA |
| Pueblo, CO* | Fort Collins, CO | Portland, OR |
| San Bernardino, CA* | Fort Wayne, IN | Providence, RI |
| Santa Ana, CA* | Fort Worth, TX | Richmond, VA |
| Shreveport, LA* | Fremont, CA | Rochester, NY |
| Tallahassee, FL* | Fresno, CA | Rochester, MN |
| Akron, OH | Grand Rapids, MI | Rockford, IL |
| Albuquerque, NM | Hartford, CT | Salem, OR |
| Anchorage, AK | Huntsville, AL | Salt Lake City, UT |
| Arlington, TX | Jackson, MS | San Diego, CA |
| Atlanta, GA | Jacksonville, FL | San Francisco, CA |
| Augusta, GA | Kansas City, KS | Savannah, GA |
| Austin, TX | Lansing, MI | Seattle, WA |
| Baltimore, MD | Lexington, KY | Sioux Falls    SD |
| Baton Rouge, LA | Lincoln, NE | Spokane, WA |
| Birmingham, AL | Little Rock, AR | Springfield, MO |
| Boise, ID | Long Beach, CA | Springfield, MA |
| Boston, MA | Los Angeles, CA | St Louis, MO |
| Brownsville, TX | Macon, GA | St. Paul, MN |
| Buffalo, NY | Madison, WI | Sugar Land, TX |
| Charlotte, NC | Memphis, TN | Syracuse, NY |
| Chicago, IL | Mesa, AZ | Tacoma, WA |
| Cincinnati, OH | Milwaukee, WI | Toledo, OH |
| Cleveland, OH | Minneapolis, MN | Tulsa, OK |
| Columbia, SC | Montgomery, AL | Virginia Beach, VA |
| Columbus, OH | Nashville, TN | Washington, D.C. |
| Columbus, GA | New Haven, CT | Wichita, KS |
| Dallas, TX | New Orleans, LA | Worcester, MA |

## General rules for selection (from Wong et al., 2007)

1. Local school district not part of a supervisory union.
2. District principally serves a central city.
3. At least 40 schools in the district.
4. At least 75% of its students come from the major city it serves.
5. City must send at least 75% of its students to the same school district.

**Appendix B: State of the City Coding Scheme**

The first set of codes broadly identifies where mayors talk about each level of education (code all instances). If you have a "2" code, you should also likely have a "3" code and a "4" code (Unless the code is "2a," in which case codes 3 and 4 are not applicable). A valid code could look thusly: 1a, 2b, 3ab, 4al(ii). For codes under #2, examples are given but not exhaustive. For codes under #4, a-k refer to governmental actors, those under l are non-governmental.

1. Mentions education generally. Code every instance.
   a. K-12 public education
   b. Higher education (including community colleges). College readiness does NOT belong in this code.
   c. Early childhood, preschool
2. Mentions service integration. Below codes for the depth of what is said. If specific actors are mentioned, use the codes under #3 to identify which actors are highlighted. Text need not deal with schools to be coded 2.
   a. Cursory mention **without mention of specific agencies** (e.g. "Agencies must work together to tackle problems").
   b. Cursory mention **with mention of specific agencies**, but without mention of specific programs, administrative coordination or programmatic changes (e.g. "The parks department can provide assistance to help schools").
   c. Mentions general directive for **specific administrators** to collaborate (e.g. "I've asked superintendent X and economic development chief Y to discuss ways to improve work prospects).
   d. Mentions **specific current or future programs** (e.g. "the parks department has worked with schools to create after school programs, " "the gates foundation has worked to introduce eye doctors into schools to get children prescription glasses")
   e. Mentions specific **ongoing or to be created committee or administrative body** focused on fostering service integration (e.g. "We have created a new committee that where the superintendent will work with housing officials to create innovative solutions…" "our standing social service committee is looking for ways to…").
   f. Mentions **specific ways to change organizational environments** (e.g. "I have moved the departments of education and housing into the same building" "We have done X to breed an collaborative culture")
   g. Mentions **specific accountability measures** attached to service integration activities (e.g. "schools will now be judged by the ways in which they coordinate with social workers…")
3. Governmental Level of Actors Mentioned
   a. Local
   b. county/regional
   c. State
   d. Federal
4. Actors Mentioned
   a. Education
   b. Economic development (including job centers/workforce investment not housed in schools.)
   c. Health services (including nutrition services not run by schools)

d. Social work agencies/human services agencies(e.g. child services)
e. Welfare agencies (more monetarily focused than above—e.g. TANF, SNAP
f. Housing agencies
g. Public safety/justice -- Fire/police/judiciary/EMS/other public safety
h. Transportation authority
i. Parks and recreation departments (including libraries)
j. City planning/zoning/architecture
k. General/other governmental actor (please specify, if applicable)
l. Non-governmental actors
   i. Foundations/philanthropies (including hospitals not publicly owned or run by universities)
   ii. Businesses if organized and providing a service
   iii. Church/religious organization
   iv. Colleges/universities providing a service
   v. Community organization/non-profit
   vi. Other non-governmental service provider (please specify)

**Appendix C: Interview Protocol**
(Bold represents vital questions, other questions occurred if time permitted)

Background
   1. **What is your formal title?**
   2. **How long have you been in this position?**
   3. **Have you worked in other government or social service positions in this city?**

General Collaboration
   1. **Can you identify your biggest partners when it comes to interagency collaboration? Is there anything specific that helps make these partnerships especially meaningful?**
   2. Does <AGENCY> have specific goals when it comes to working with other social service agencies? Is there any accountability for meeting these collaborative goals? Are there incentives?
   3. About how many other social service agencies does your agency currently work with <GIVE EXAMPLES OF BOTH GOV'T AND NON GOV'T SO THEY ARE CLEAR>? How many do you personally work with?

Service Integration with Schools
   4. **How would you compare coordination around education issues to health or <OTHER SERVICE PERHAPS MENTIONED EARLIER> issues? Are there more or fewer collaborative efforts? Why do you think that is?**
   5. **Can you tell me about one of your collaborations on an education issue?**
      a. **FOLLOW UP AS NEEDED: Who initiated the collaboration? How is it working? Did you run into any problems? What happened? Who resolved the issue? Why was this an issue?**
      b. **Based on your experience, what have you found is really key to facilitating collaboration around education issues specifically? Are there common roadblocks?**
   6. **If <AGENCY> wanted to initiate a new collaboration specifically about an education issue, how might you begin that process?**
      a. **Are there administrative entities in place to help cross-agency work? For example, are there standing committees? Have agencies been consolidated?**

Mayor Office Role
   7. **What role, if any, does the Mayor's office play in fostering collaborations? Is this true for education collaborations also?**
   8. **Based on the things you've told me about these partnerships, are there ways the mayor's office might do more to help social services agencies work together? What about specifically working with schools?**
   9. In <YEAR, Mayor TK> stated, "<GIVE EXAMPLE FROM STATE OF THE CITY SPEECH.>" Can you tell me more about what happened around this initiative? What role did the Mayor's office play in shaping this program?

Conclusion
   10. **Is there anything else I should know about the ways in which <AGENCY> works with others?**
   11. **Here is a list of individuals I'm speaking with. Is there anyone else you would add?**

**Appendix D: Interview Coding Scheme**

1. Help
2. Hinder
3. Issue raised
   a. Outcomes (attainable or measurable)
   b. Org issues
      i. Institutionalized practice
      ii. Bureaucracy/internal policies/size
      iii. Culture/politics
      iv. Leadership issues
   c. Governance
   d. Job issues
      i. Too many, added responsibilities
      ii. Unclear job responsibilities
      iii. Lacking clarity for who is responsible
   e. Relationships
      i. Trust
      ii. Access
      iii. Communication
      iv. Collaborative personalities
      v. Competition, Turfism
   f. Turnover
   g. Resources
      i. Financial
      ii. Staffing
      iii. Other capacity, non-financial, non-staffing
   h. Agenda attention
   i. Sustained attention to collaboration, "Groundswell" from community
   j. Goals: clear and shared
   k. Environmental issues (e.g. collocation)
   l. Administrative arrangements (e.g. formal joint-planning committees)
   m. Accountability for collaboration (e.g. judged on collaboration)
4. Specific collaborative group
5. Issue location
   a. Policy
   b. Federal or state agencies
   c. Mayor's office
   d. City government generally
   e. School District
   f. Outside NPO
   g. Outside private sector
6. Org Level
   a. Leadership (mayor, superintendent, agency head)
   b. Mid-level (any non top-line staff, i.e. assistant commissioners)
   c. Street-level (those interacting with clients, i.e. principals or teachers)
7. Mayoral role in collaboration
8. Mayoral control mentioned

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